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Lennart Lundquist

Means and Goals of Political Decentralization

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MEANS AND GOALS OF POLITICAL
DECENTRALIZATION

AKADEMISK AVHANDLING

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LENNART LUNDQUIST

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Means and Goals of Political Decentralization

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This book is a collection of the papers of the author, which have been published in various journals and books, and which are now being brought together in this volume.

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To Marie-Louise

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INTRODUCTION

The problem of decentralization

The term decentralization often occurs in social science and in present day debates. It is used with many different meanings and in various contexts: we speak, for instance, of economic, administrative, and political decentralization. Moreover, the word has an obvious positive value loading and is used rather like the terms democracy and equality. The choice of a basis for study of the various phenomena covered by the term decentralization is therefore not entirely straight forward. James W. Fesler, who can be regarded as perhaps the foremost decentralization analyst in political science, suggests in the following quotation some of the difficulties encountered even in the initial phase of the study of decentralization:

"Decentralization" is an apparently simple term. Yet the appearance is deceiving and often leads to simplistic treatments that generalize too broadly, start from a doctrinaire position predetermining answers to concrete problems, or concentrate on a single phase of decentralization to the exclusion of others. "Decentralization" is a term of rich conceptual and empirical meaning; it can designate static fact and dynamic process; and it can refer to pure ideal-type and to moderate incremental change.¹⁾

A possible starting point, the one to be used here, is to study decentralization in an organization and then to try to apply the rationale of the study to corresponding conditions in the political system. Big advantages are offered if, in the initial situation, the large organization is chosen as the object of study. Firstly, the large organization is comparatively uncomplicated — at least, compared with a political system — and this makes it simpler to distinguish the variables relevant to a special problem. It could be said that one reaches a kind of "model-like" simplicity from almost the start of the study. Secondly, the large organization is the object of an extensive scientific literature in which most of the phenomena of interest to political studies are discussed.

It is the *large* organization that is of interest because it offers problems that are not encountered in the *small* organization. In particular, the large

1) Fesler 1965, p. 536; cf. Baum 1961, p. 21 ff.

organization has more need of an internal division of labour, which in turn, gives rise to the question of who is to make the organization's decisions. The localization of decision-making ranks amongst "the basic problems of the theory and practice of good organization", according to a generally accepted view in the literature.²⁾ The localizing of decisions is usually discussed in terms of centralization and decentralization, and one ventures to suggest that the larger the organizations and the more important the functions they have fulfilled in society, the more vital has the problem of the balance between centralization and decentralization become for the organization theoretician.

What is the significance of the term decentralization? At this stage of the work, it is sufficient to give just a rough definition. It seems here quite natural to refer to the organization literature oriented towards business economics, which mainly discusses decentralization in a more formalized manner. In the business concern, decentralization is usually defined as follows.

In centralization all, or at least most important, decisions are made by one individual or a very small group of individuals. Usually this occurs at the top of the organizational hierarchy. Decentralization exists when decision making has been thrust down in the hierarchy so that lower managers, and perhaps even employees at the work level, make as well as execute organizational decisions.³⁾

The expression that "the decision making has been thrust down in the hierarchy" is so vague, however, that it must be defined. What variables are involved in the means of decentralization? The first part of this dissertation is devoted to defining these variables. A second question, which naturally follows in this type of topical analysis, is: on what grounds does the management choose between centralization and decentralization? or formulated differently: what goals has the management when it prefers centralization or decentralization?

There are reasons to pause for a moment at the second question. From one point of view, decentralization can be studied as a conflict between those whose function is to co-ordinate, and those who try to oppose co-ordination. It is usually pointed out that centralization is chosen because it is expected to lead to better co-ordination of the organization's activities and better utilization of cost demanding technical equipment and qualified experts. Some are of the opinion that decentralization is to be preferred because it results in a better use of the individual employee's capacity in that he is motivated to produce better performances. In either case, it is expected that the result will be a more rational firmation of decisions, which will help

2) The Balance between . . . 1954, pp. 3 ff. 44; cf. Kochen-Deutsch 1969, p. 735 f.; Litterer 1965, p. 393; Pfiffner - Sherwood 1960, p. 190 ff.; Baum 1961, p. 1.

3) Litterer 1965, p. 379; cf. Melesko 1970, p. 2:38; The Balance between . . . 1954, p. 28; Pfiffner-Sherwood 1960, p. 197 f.

4) Cf. Pfiffner-Sherwood 1960, p. 191 ff.; Ramström 1966, p. 100 ff.; Ramström 1969, p. 140 f.; Litterer 1965, p. 378 ff.; The Balance between . . . 1954, p. 12 ff.

the management to achieve its general objectives, for instance, profit satisfaction.⁴⁾ With the strong positive value loading given to decentralization, it has become usual to describe its antithesis, centralization, in terms of its negative outcomes:

It hampers effective action, it breeds resentment, it wastes valuable time, it causes lost opportunities; perhaps equally serious, it restricts the use of the potential management skill available and stunts the growth of executive manpower.⁵⁾

The problem of the large enterprise occurs repeatedly in the socialist economies. Their history can be described as a constant interaction between centralistic and decentralistic powers. The negative consequences in particular are pointed out with great severity. Centralization leads to unwieldiness, delays and confusion. Decentralization leads to a "localism", which indicates that the general society interests are ignored in favour of the local, and that planning and co-ordination are rendered difficult. It has proved extremely hard to apply the fundamental principle of democratic centralism, which is intended to connect effective central steering and review with possibilities of local initiatives.⁶⁾

Thus decentralization is a general problem of organizations. In all the meanings in which the term is used, there is a common denominator, namely, "away from the centre"; this is the linguistic significance of the word. The term must then be defined for the particular case in which it is to be used.⁷⁾ The object of study in this work is political decentralization, i.e. the decentralization effected by the political system's decision maker (the authoritative decision maker). The problem will be analysed from the standpoint of this decision maker and so related to the political process. A complete understanding of political decentralization presumes an understanding of this relation.⁸⁾

Some preliminary remarks on the object of study will now be made. In the literature on decentralization, a distinction between functional and territorial decentralization often occurs.⁹⁾ This division is of fundamental interest for a political science study. Functional decentralization usually suggests distribution of functions or "power", which is the common term, between the political rulers of society at the central level. This form can be said to be one of the classical objects of study for political science; consequently, an extensive literature has been devoted to it. Territorial decentralization, "areal divi-

5) *The Balance between . . .* 1954, p. 17.

6) Cf. Nove 1968, p. 73 f.; Shurman 1968, pp. 85 ff. 173 ff. 195 ff.; Schapiro 1965, p. 129 ff.

7) Cf. Macmahon 1961, p. 15.

8) Cf. Riggs 1968, p. 50 f.

9) Cf. *The Balance between . . .* 1954, *passim*; Pfiffner-Sherwood 1960, p. 195 f.

sion of powers", means transfer of "power" to an organization that is responsible for a subarea of the social territory.¹⁰⁾ The various possibilities that exist concerning the localization of power in society are sometimes interpreted as being of decisive importance for the shaping of society. Fesler puts this view most forcefully:

Distribution of governmental authority is one of the oldest and most abiding problems of society. By our solutions of this distributive problem we determine whether the government will be stable or unstable; whether it will be dictatorship, a government by and for the few, or a government by and for the many; whether the government will be quickly responsive or unduly laggard in meeting the needs of the society; whether policies will be made by popular representatives, by experts, or by an effective combination of the two; whether we shall have the rule of law, the rule of men, or the rule of men under law.¹¹⁾

The present work is devoted to the territorial variant of decentralization, which in its turn can be analysed in different situations. *The term decentralization will here be reserved for the situation in which "power" is transferred to a particular political system for a subarea of the social territory.* Thus it will involve problems that can be said to apply from federalism at a very high political level down to and including "local communities" at the lowest level. It is mainly the relation of the decentralization problem to the latter pole that is the object of analysis here. However, the scheme of analysis, whose construction is the central purpose of the dissertation, could also be used for a study of federalism.

In order to achieve a meaningful analysis of decentralization, the phenomenon must be considered as part of a large set of questions about the localization of "power" in the political system. This set of questions and its significance for the political scientist has been formulated by Fesler as follows:

Governmental arrangements institutionalize the means for maximizing some values and for minimizing others. How far the political scientist *qua* scientist should engage in choosing or rank-ordering the values is a question debated within the profession. But there is probably no disagreement to the proposition that he should diligently seek to identify which governmental arrangements institutionalize which means for achieving which values.¹²⁾

The final words in the quotation's last clause, "to identify which governmental arrangements institutionalize which means for achieving which values", indicate the angle of approach from which decentralization is analysed in the present work.

10) Cf. Fesler 1968, p. 370; Maass 1959, p. 10 f.; Meyer 1957, p. 58 f.

11) Fesler 1949, p. 1; cf. Maass 1959, p. 9 f.; Hoffmann 1959, p. 113 ff.; Blondel 1969, p. 282 ff.

12) Fesler 1965, p. 538.

The literature on decentralization

Various disciplines contribute on the extensive literature on the problems of decentralization. Naturally it is impracticable to attempt a concise digest of this literature so recourse is made to the impressions of other authors.

The literary survey includes three subsections. The first two are accounts of the decentralization literature in political science and general social science, respectively. The word decentralization has been used with various meanings in these works. The last subsection contains an attempt to describe the dependence of this dissertation on earlier literature in so far as its approach to the analysis of decentralization is concerned. The various subsections must unfortunately be given a very rhapsodical formulation.

Whereas the problem of division of power at the central level has been one of the classical issues of political science since the time of Aristotle, decentralization on a territorial basis has only been given peripheral attention.¹³⁾ In particular, fundamental studies of decentralization are very, or even surprisingly, rare. Fesler in the latest and most detailed survey of the decentralization literature, points out that there are many excellent studies of individual countries and organizations where most variables relevant to the problem have been noted. However, he is forced to establish that "almost none of the empirical experience recorded in these monographs and case studies has been synthesized".¹⁴⁾ In a still later article, Sharpe refers to the essay collection *Area and Power* (1959) as "the most exhaustive discussion of the division of powers by area."¹⁵⁾ This work, however, contains hardly any formalizing attempts which are at all elaborate.

The scarcity of political science articles concerned with decentralization is illustrated by Kochen-Deutsch who point out that one of the discipline's leading magazines, *The American Political Science Review*, has — in 57 years — published no more than one article on the subject.¹⁶⁾ Since then, Kochen-Deutsch's article and a reply to it have been published. Of the more than 25,000 articles that have been presented in *International Science Abstracts* during the 1950s and 1960s, there are only about ten under the entry 'decentralization', which further illustrates political scientists' lack of interest in the problem.

The political science literature which is principally concerned with decentralization contains works on "local self-government". If one makes a distinction between decision makers and implementers, one can say that this literature analyses the problem from the aspect of the implementer, often in a special chapter that deals with the relations between "local government"

13) Cf. Hoffman 1959, p. 113 f.

14) Fesler 1968, p. 376.

15) Sharpe 1970, p. 155.

16) Kochen-Deutsch 1969, p. 736.

and "central government".¹⁷⁾ The works of the Swedish local government research group illustrate this. However, the perspective of the decision maker, namely, how he can vary the means of decentralization to achieve his goals, is much more unusual. But with the aid of these "implementation studies", it is often possible to reconstruct variables relevant to the decision maker.

Why has political science not paid greater attention to the decentralization problem? Sometimes a hypothesis based on the history of political thought is presented which seems plausible. According to this, political science, in its choice of problems, was for long dependent on classical Greek political science as presented primarily by Aristotle. In the Greek city state, with its limited territory where everyone could become acquainted with everyone else, decentralization was naturally not an acute problem. Not until governments were formed with greater territories, for instance, the Roman Empire, was decentralization politically relevant.¹⁸⁾ None the less, decentralization did not occupy a central place in political theory: too many factors counteracted such a development. If, for instance, one refers to modern times, the developing nation states, deeply engaged in their consolidation efforts, were found to have little interest in decentralization experiments. In that event, it is somewhat more surprising that the division of power on the central level dominated the debate when, in the federal United States, the first big practical step was taken towards decentralization.¹⁹⁾

The first theoretician who deserves to be called a decentralization analyst is de Tocqueville. During the nineteenth century, several more appeared who can illustrate that it is possible to advocate decentralization with completely different objectives. There was Taine, who in reaction against the French Revolution wished to create a new elite through decentralization; and there were the utopian socialists, who on the basis of an almost diametrically opposed standpoint argued for a far-reaching decentralization.²⁰⁾ The progressing industrialization gradually presented a new situation. During the twentieth century, several dominant features of development — for instance, the need for economic accumulation of powers during depression and the development of the welfare state — counteracted decentralization.²¹⁾ It was actually not until the period after World War II that decentralization became a main political issue. It is difficult to elucidate all the underlying factors, but generally, this development can perhaps be seen as a stage in the effort to create alternatives to the growing strength of the central power; in other words: to counteract bureaucratization. In the less developed countries, decentralization has been interpreted as an important instrument in attempts to effect economic, social, and political development.²²⁾

17) Cf. Humes-Martin 1961, p. 31 ff.; Jackson 1966, p. 127 ff.

18) Cf. Hoffman 1959, p. 113 f.; Maass 1959, p. 22 f.; *The Balance between . . .* 1954, p. 57.

19) Cf. Maass 1959, p. 23.

20) Hoffman 1959, p. 130 ff.

21) Maass 1959, p. 23.

22) Cf. *Decentralization for . . .* 1962.

In view of the situation in the literature of political science on decentralization, it is quite natural that one should refer to the corresponding literature in other disciplines.²³⁾ Because decentralization is such a general organizational problem, it is not difficult to find such accounts. This applies mainly to the discipline — or perhaps one should say the disciplines — that can generally be called organization theory.

Herbert Kaufman (1964) writes that there is a deep and seldom bridged gap between organization theory and political science, if one measures the extent of the information flow between the two disciplines.²⁴⁾ This observation can still be said to apply to the administration part of political science, although an increasing interest in administration studies in that discipline ought to bring it closer to organization theory in due course.

The connecting points between the two disciplines are rather important. This concerns not least some of the points fundamental to this study: the concept of actors who make partly rational decisions and the concept of special processes for the co-ordination of human activities.²⁵⁾ The agreement between the problems of organization theory and of political science is, on the whole, striking. This reflects the fundamental similarities between the objects of study of the two disciplines: on the one hand, organizations are fundamental to all social life ("What aspect of civilized existence then lies outside the scope of organization theory?"), and on the other hand, all organizations have what might be called political aspects.²⁶⁾ It is quite obvious that a student of political decentralization must refer to the literature of organization theory and this probably applies to most political science problems too.²⁷⁾ The first three chapters in this dissertation can be said to be an attempt to "translate" a political science problem into a general organizational problem.

In organization theory, it is not easy to find works with more developed models of decentralization. This, in any event, is valid if the works involved are to be called "theory" or even by the considerably less ambitious designation "scheme of analysis". Baum, for instance, summarizes his survey of the sociological literature on decentralization by saying that he has not found any analytical framework that can be applied to the analysis of even simple organizations.²⁸⁾ In business economics there is undoubtedly an extensive literature in the sphere of decentralization, but the question is whether anybody can be said to have achieved a decentralization theory. In a recently published work, Melesko refers to the 1954 publication *The Balance between Centralization and Decentralization* (ed. Kruisinga) for more detailed analyses. The articles included in this latter work, however, cannot claim to present any developed scheme of analysis of decentralization. Moreover, the

23) Cf. Kochen-Deutsch 1969, p. 736 f.

24) Kaufman 1964, p. 5.

25) *ibid.*, p. 6 ff.

26) *ibid.*, p. 10.

27) Cf. Jansson 1969, p. 35 ff.

28) Baum 1961, p. 4.

articles are not primarily oriented towards territorial but towards functional decentralization. The impression of decentralization as a problem that is interpreted in organization theory as fundamental though hardly formalized, is intensified by information in other literature oriented towards economics.²⁹⁾

The formalizations of operational analysis have progressed far with the aid of mathematical technique and there have been attempts to link political science with these formalizations so as to create a scheme of analysis for decentralization.³⁰⁾ The models, however, are still at a very early stage of development, and as yet cannot offer instruments usable for analysis of political decentralization.³¹⁾

The aspects of decentralization treated here will now be covered in a few brief points concerning their relations to other literature. The following quotation, taken from Herbert A. Simon, *Administrative Behaviour*, can serve as a summary of the basic concept adopted in the present work:

A realistic analysis of centralization must include a study of the allocation of decisions in the organization, and the methods of influence that are employed by the higher levels to affect the decisions at the lower levels.³²⁾

The quotation suggests that decentralization hardly permits itself to be analysed without relation to the activities of the organization in other respects. The chosen method of analysis can be described with the following quotation:

In order to present an adequate analytical view of decentralization, it is necessary to examine the process of management itself.³³⁾

This process, here called the control process, is presented in a form that relates to the tradition — with Herbert A. Simon as a prominent figure — of “rational choice”, which can be interpreted as a main current in organization theory. Where views on the control process are concerned, the following account is fundamentally inspired by works of Swedish economic organization theoreticians in this tradition: Dick Ramström and Eric Rhenman.³⁴⁾

However, the control process presented here is based on premises that presume an organization of considerable size. The reason for this is that the relation of the political system to the organization which is to be studied must be relatively simple. The control process is applied to the political process with the aid of the terminology created by David Easton. The reason for using this relatively well known conceptual apparatus of political science is to localize the problem in a way that ought to be well known to the political scientist. But there are no attempts to integrate the “rational-choice”

29) Cf. Whisler 1964, p. 330 f.

30) Cf. Kochen-Deutsch 1969, *passim*.

31) Cf. Levy-Truman 1971, *passim*.

32) Simon 1957a, p. 38; cf. Whisler 1964, pp. 314 ff. 332; Baum 1961, p. 23 ff.

33) The Balance between . . . 1954, p. 10.

34) Ramström 1966, 1967, 1969, Rhenman 1964, 1969.

view with system theory, and the use of this apparatus does not turn this work into a study of systems analysis. The system maintaining aspect, fundamental with Easton, is in the main missing.

Thus, the most important influences are mentioned. In other respects, the dependence on other literature is indicated by the references in the footnotes. In conclusion, the source of the meaning of centralization and decentralization is also given, as these two words are the key words of the dissertation. The source is French administrative literature, presented through the agency of Poul Meyer, *Administrative Organization* (1957), which in its integration of organization theory and political science must be interpreted as an important pioneer work.

The aim of the dissertation

The dissertation presents a scheme of analysis or a model (both terms are used synonymously) for political decentralization. The intention in constructing this model is to produce what Gunnar Sjöblom calls a “systematic preparatory work for the formulation of a theory”.³⁵⁾ *The model intended here sees the decentralization phenomenon from the point of view of the political decision maker*; therefore the theory, for which the model will be regarded as a “systematic preparatory work”, must be able to answer the question:

What variables are involved in the means of decentralization and what goals can the decision maker achieve with the use of these variables?

In order to answer the question, we must elucidate the relations between three variables: namely, between the means of decentralization, the outcomes of decentralization, and the situation in which these outcomes are obtained. The relations can be formulated in the question: What value must be given to the means of decentralization in order to obtain a certain outcome in a certain situation?

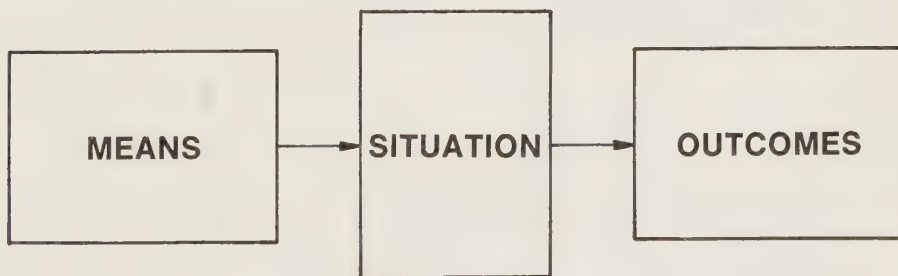


Fig. 1. The variables in the decentralization theory

35) Sjöblom 1968, p. 7 ff.

Knowing these relations, the decision maker can thus directly anticipate what outcomes a certain decentralization method will have. The model, however, does not have this extremely high level of ambition. It primarily delimits the variables that compose the means of decentralization. In principle, the model can be said to aim at answering the first stage in the basic set of questions: *What variables are involved in the means of decentralization?*



Fig. 2. The decentralization model in relation to the decentralization theory

The decision maker's goals (desired outcomes) are discussed next. Where goals are concerned, they can be said to be strongly situation bound, i.e. each actor has his own goals. Where decentralization is concerned, it seems as though there are a number of typical decentralization goals. Whether this is actually so is largely an empirical question. The goal hierarchy is only roughly defined on two goal levels. The relevance of goal reasoning to determining outcomes naturally depends on the degree of rationality of the decision maker.

This model, with its differentiated means of decentralization and a very roughly indicated goal hierarchy, is then applied to material consisting of texts taken from the debate about local self-government in Sweden. It is mostly against the background of this empirical material that the goal reasoning has been done. The thought is that one should be able to use the goals as a first approximation of the outcomes, or rather, perhaps, as a first signpost towards the outcomes. The situation descriptions of the texts can be thought to fill a corresponding function in relation to the situation variable.



Fig. 3. The content analysis in relation to the decentralization theory

The results that can be expected from a content analysis, are discussed later (cf. 4.3).

The application of the model to this empirical material has three purposes. These are mentioned below in their presumed order of importance:

- to illustrate the model's instrumentality, i.e. to show that empirical actors really argue in terms that are translatable in the model's variables;
- to illustrate conceivable goals for decentralization. The goal designations in the texts, with all the reservations that must be made for the result of a pure content analysis, can possibly be thought to function as first indications of the outcomes;
- to describe in the model's terminology the Swedish local government debate on certain occasions, without intending to write the policy history of the debates concerned.

In general, this material can be supposed to be suitable for the purposes mentioned. The debate can be said to treat the fundamental problems from the point of view of the decision maker, i.e. how he will manipulate the decentralization variables to achieve his objectives.

The presentation of the model in the first two chapters is sufficiently generalized to make it applicable to all cases of political decentralization. Chapter 3 is provided with many empirical illustrations. These are taken from the discussions of the liberal democracies about decentralization to local communities; therefore this part of the dissertation emphasizes the liberal-democratic concept of the problems involved.

The arrangement of the dissertation

The dissertation is arranged in two main sections. The first, *The decentralization model*, contains an attempt to construct a scheme of analysis for decentralization. The second, *The decentralization debate*, tests this scheme of analysis; it also offers bases for further development.

The first part of the dissertation consists of three chapters. In the first, *The control process*, the steering-review-model is constructed and forms the basis for the entire presentation which follows. In the second, *Transfer of allocation of values*, the transfer variables are delimited in relation to political science terminology, and a goal rationale is introduced. The third, *Decentralization*, contains a comparatively detailed discussion of the decentralization variables and a brief comment on the goals of decentralization. A discussion of the degree of decentralization ends this first part.

The second part of the dissertation also contains three chapters. Chapter 4, *General basis for the content analysis*, describes the use of the means of decentralization over 150 years, and the research technique "qualitative content analysis" is discussed. The two remaining chapters, *Decentralization debate in the 1850s* and *Decentralization debate in the 1960s*, present relations between means and goals in two very different situations.

PART ONE
THE DECENTRALIZATION MODEL

Chapter 1

The control process

The control process is concerned with the relations between the roles of decision maker and implementer in an organization. The distinction between these two roles is seen as an analytical matter. He who in relation to one level is implementer can in relation to another level be decision maker.¹⁾ The simple model presented here presumes an organization consisting of a decision-making unit and one or more implementation units.

According to a common definition, an organization means "an arrangement of interdependent parts, each having a special function with respect to the whole". It has "a basic objective, and to be viable it must have some control system to guarantee accomplishment of this objective".²⁾ It is sometimes questioned whether an organization actually has *one* basic goal in view, especially when one is concerned with the political system, the type of organization which is the object of analysis of this dissertation. Goals can be imagined at different levels so that the achievement of one goal is a prerequisite for the achievement of other goals. Such an intermediate goal could be that the organization system should continue to exist, which might be a prerequisite for achieving goals such as happiness and prosperity for the individual.³⁾ Because the organization is still goal oriented, it must have some form of control process that co-ordinates its activities towards the determined goals. The problems arising from goal conflicts will not be discussed here.

The fact that the organization's activities are goal oriented implies that its decision-making is rational.⁴⁾ As for the value of such an idea as a prerequisite for studies of organization theory and the level of rationality that is supposed to exist in the organization, this study refers to the opinion expressed by Simon:

A theory of administration or organization cannot exist without a theory of rational choice. Human behavior in organizations is best described as "intendedly rational"; and it merits that description more than any other sector of human behavior.⁵⁾

1) Cf. Riggs 1968, p. 51 ff.; Etzioni 1965, p. 650. Business economic organization theoreticians discuss the same relation in terms of the administrative units and production units of an enterprise (cf. Rhenman 1964, p. 6; Ramström 1967, p. 51 f.; Ramström 1969, p. 53).

2) Cartwright 1965, p. 1 f.; cf. Blau-Scott 1963, p. 5; The Balance between... 1954, p. 3 f.

3) Cf. Langefors 1968, p. 39 ff.

4) Cf. Ramström 1967, pp. 34, 46 f.

5) Simon 1957b, p. 196; cf. Taylor 1965, p. 59 ff.; Ramström 1967, p. 45 f.

The organization must be an open system, which means that it communicates with its environment by input and output. Apart from this, the organization is presumed to have a number of qualities so chosen that the model can be quite easily defined in terms of the political system. These qualities are:

- (1) the organization must be so large that it includes special suborganizations which take care of the decision-making and implementation functions.
- (2) "the distance" between decision makers and implementers must be so large that communication between them cannot take place by face-to-face contacts.
- (3) the organization's activity must be of a range that precludes the decision maker from taking part in every individual implementation case.

1.1 The variables in the control process

The organization is presumed to include a control process that co-ordinates its activities towards its determined goals. This process can be described as an information transaction between decision maker and implementer. It concerns primarily a communication problem that should be analysed on the basis of the information that is the main content of the communication.¹⁾ Transactions other than of information also occur. Kochen-Deutsch, for instance, discuss the transfer of "people, things and information" with reference to the process of decentralization.²⁾ The first two of these objects of transfer can also be analysed in terms of information.

The communication process, more than most phenomena, has been the object of study in the social sciences. This has resulted in communication analysts developing a well-tried scheme of analysis — the so-called communication paradigm. The relation between decision maker and implementer in the organization is analysed in terms of this scheme.

In its classical version, the communication paradigm was worded: *who says what, to whom, how and with what outcome?*³⁾ Thus, five variables: transmitter, communication, receiver, channel, and outcome, were obtained. Research has gradually added new variables to the paradigm, one of which is the transmitter's intentions or goals, i.e. answering the question: why is a communication transmitted?⁴⁾ Another variable refers to the current situation, i.e. answering the question: under what circumstances does the communication take place?⁵⁾ With these two new variables, the scheme of analysis can be reformulated as: *who says what, why, under what circumstances, to whom, how, and with what outcome?*

1) Cf. Guetzkow 1965, p. 534; Ramström 1967, p. 55 f.; Stymne 1970, p. 34.

2) Kochen-Deutsch 1969, p. 737 f.

3) Lasswell-Lerner-Pool 1952, p. 12.

4) Sjöblom 1968, p. 99 f.; Holsti 1969, p. 24 ff.

5) Sjöblom 1968, p. 99 ff.; George 1959 A, p. 107 ff.

With the introduction of computers, information technique has developed at tremendous speed. Where the communication paradigm is concerned, this has resulted in the addition of a further variable. If the transmitter is to function rationally, it must be informed of the outcomes of its communication. Without such information, it is unable to correct undesirable outcomes. Information about the outcomes of the communication is obtained through a process called feedback in cybernetic terminology.⁶⁾ It can be described as a communication in a channel to the transmitter. Feedback is added to the communication paradigm as an eighth variable.

To sum up, the scheme of analysis involves two actors: one that sends a communication, *the transmitter*, and one that receives it, *the receiver* — and two *channels* via which the communications are transmitted — one from the transmitter to the receiver, and the other — *the feedback communication* — from the receiver to the transmitter. The activity of the transmitter has a *purpose*, and its communications result in *outcomes*. All this takes place in a certain *situation* that contains all the activities involved that have not been included in the variables enumerated so far.

The communication paradigm is now applied to the relation between decision maker and implementer in an organization with the above-mentioned qualities. The actors then become the suborganizations i.e. the transmitter (*the decision maker*) and the receiver (*the implementer*). Naturally, exchanged roles can also be imagined, i.e. the implementer becoming the transmitter and the decision maker the receiver. In this study, the former communication channel is analysed; this in no wise implies that, in general, it is more important than the other channel. It is merely a question of an analytical delimitation, which is justified on the basis of the fundamental problems in the dissertation.

The decision maker's conscious attempts to influence the implementation in a certain direction are called *steering*. It consists in the main of information formulated in various ways, although it can also consist of other things, for instance, money. The latter form of steering is described in terms of information. The steering consciousness of the decision maker presumes that he has *goals* for his activity and that the steered implementation will result in *outcomes*. The difference between goals and outcomes can be said to be a measure of the rationality of the decision, and the difference between decision and implementation, a measure of the reliability of the steering. A more detailed analysis in these respects is accounted for in the steering section below (cf. 1.3).

The information produced by the feedback process partly reflects the conscious efforts of the decision maker to get information about the rationality of his decision and the reliability of the steering. This activity, which

6) Kochen-Deutsch 1969, p. 735; cf. Ramström 1969, p. 52.

follows the implementation decision, is called *review* and is analysed in a special subsection (cf. 1.4.)⁷⁾ The review can be measured in scope and effectiveness. Its scope applies to that part of the implementation that is the object of review, and its effectiveness to those parts of the deviations that are indicated by the review. To the extent that the review indicates deviations, the decision maker can correct the implementation by *re-steering*. Re-steering means steering that is used after an indication of a deviation.

Both steering and review communications are transmitted through *channels*. The qualities of these channels are one of the variables that determine the reliability of the steering and the review.⁸⁾ These qualities include the ability of the channel to transmit communications faultlessly, the time the communication takes, the costs of the communication, and the capacity of the channel.⁹⁾ When the decision maker determines his steering and review strategies, the qualities of the two channels are one of the basic variables.¹⁰⁾

Finally, the control process is influenced by its environment. The variables involved here are called variables of *situation*.

The control process can be summarized using four main variables, which can in some ways be said to include all communication variables. These main variables are the decision-making process, steering, the implementation process or administrative process, and review. These four variables are discussed in more detail in the rest of the chapter. First, however, the whole control process is surveyed and described (cf. Fig. 4)¹¹⁾:

- (1) the process of decision-making leads to a decision.
- (2) the decision is transmitted by means of steering to an implementer.
- (3) the implementer carries out the decision via the administrative process.
- (4) by review, the decision maker is informed of the reliability of the steering and the rationality of the decision.
- (5) if the review does not indicate any deviation, the control process begins again from (1).
- (6) if the review indicates deviation, the decision maker can re-steer the implementation.
- (7) if the review following re-steering does not indicate any deviation from the re-steering, the control process begins again from (1).
- (8) if the review following re-steering indicates deviation from the re-steering, the control process begins again from (6).

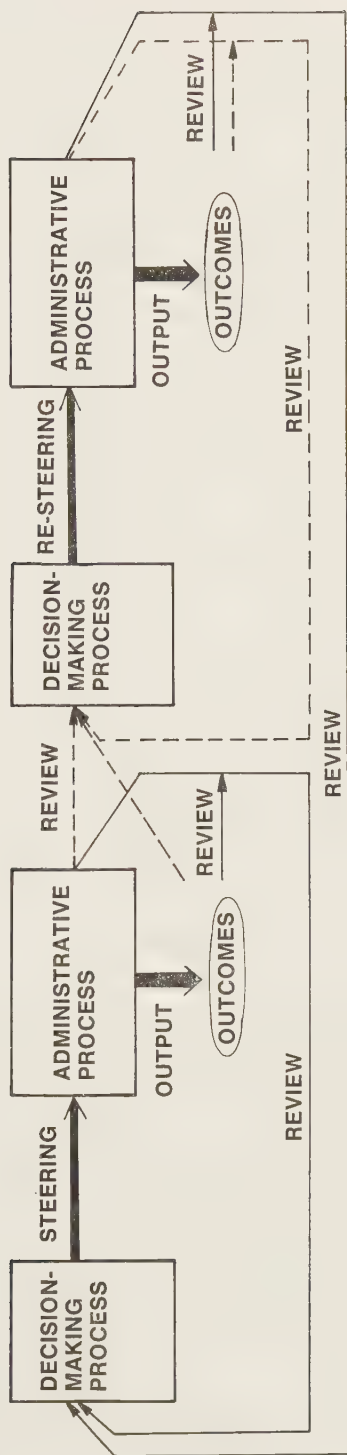
7) Various terms are found in the literature to describe what is here called steering and review. Ramström distinguishes between "control in the large" (steering) and "control in the small" (review and re-steering) – Ramström 1967, p. 54. Litterer's division is based on the time relation between the implementation decision and the control. – Litterer 1965, p. 233 ff. The term "control" is usually used to describe both steering and review, and then has the same meaning as the term control has in "control process" in this dissertation.

8) Cf. Rhenman 1964, p. 15; Litterer 1965, pp. 252, 257 f.; Ramström 1969, p. 131 f.; Melesko 1970, p. 2:39 f.; Stymne 1970, p. 12.

9) Ramström 1967, p. 75 ff., Chapter 7.

10) cf. Ramström 1969, p. 125; Kochen-Deutsch 1969, pp. 738, 745 f.; Downs 1967, p. 144 ff.

11) Cf. Litterer 1965, p. 233 ff.; Ramström 1969, p. 24 ff.; Etzioni 1965 p. 650; The Balance between ... 1954 p. 18 f.



—— review without deviation indication
 - - - - review with deviation indication

Fig. 4. The control process

1.2 The decision processes

Of the two decision processes included in the control process, the decision maker takes care of the decision-making process, and the implementer, of the administrative process. To permit further reasoning, the content of these processes must be accurately defined. The analysis of steering presumes a more detailed examination of the administrative process, because "... a component can only cause a change in the productive behavior of another component by influencing its decision-making behavior"¹⁾, and an analysis of the decision-making process is necessary in order to be able to understand the total activity of the organization.

As pointed out earlier, the distinction between decision maker and implementer is an analytical ruling. In the implementer's suborganization, the same distinction can be made: between he who makes the administrative decision and he who carries it out. In this relation, too, there are possibilities for deviations, especially if the implementer's suborganization involved is very large. In order not to complicate the model of the control process further, no deviation is presumed to exist between administrative decision and its execution.²⁾

Because both the decision-making process and the administrative process are processes of decision, they should have certain basic qualities in common. The earlier reasoning with its viewpoint based on general organization theory is therefore valid for both types of decision processes.

The decision process includes all the considerations that the actor takes into account when he makes his decision. The decision itself can be described as the agent's conscious choice between two or more courses of action or means. From this standpoint — presented by Ramström in a very elaborate form — the decision process can be analysed as an information process, where a *decision rule* is used to change a certain amount of information called *the decision basis* into a decision.³⁾ Both the decision basis and the decision rule depend on the organization's *resources*. Broadly speaking, the resources consist of money, trained personnel, a suitable organization, technical aids and so on.⁴⁾

The three variables in the decision process, namely the decision rule, the decision basis and the resources, are mutually dependent. It costs money to provide the decision basis with information and to interpret the information. Only trained personnel can make decisions with the aid of precise decision rules. Thus there is a relation between the resources, on the one hand, and the decision basis and the decision rule, on the other. There is also a relation

1) Ramström 1967, p. 54.

2) Cf. Ramström 1967, Chapter 6; Ramström 1969, p. 10.

3) Ramström 1969, p. 11.

4) Cf. Lundquist 1971, p. 72 ff.

between the two latter variables. The better the information basis, the more precise the decision rules that can be used; and the more precise the decision rule that is used, the greater are the demands made on the decision basis.⁵⁾

Following normal present day practice in studies of organization theory, a decision rule is postulated which is based on *bounded rationality*. The decision maker, the administrative man, acts rationally on the basis of the information available to him; therefore, one sometimes speaks of a decision rule that is based on subjective rationality.⁶⁾ This decision model differs from an earlier model of economic man, mainly on two points. Whereas the latter had complete information and aimed at an optimum decision, the administrative man has incomplete information and seeks only a satisfying decision.⁷⁾ The model based on economic man was too unrealistic to be fruitful in organization analysis. This is chiefly because the information was considered definite. In reality, time, money, and efforts are required to get information and then to interpret it. The decision maker is also limited in his capacity to deal with a number of matters at the same time and can only absorb a limited amount of data. Uncertainty is ever present in decision-making, especially when it comes to making various types of prognoses.⁸⁾ The decision maker is therefore presumed to turn to a decision rule based on bounded rationality.

The application of the "bounded rationality" decision rule involves the following considerations:⁹⁾

- the goals must be formulated
- only a few of the possible courses of action are taken into account
- the situation is obscure, as are its trends, which must be roughly estimated
- uncertainty prevails about the relation between goals and means. The relation must therefore be estimated by rule of thumb
- a satisfying course of action is chosen when the decision is made.

A decision rule based on bounded rationality also makes demands on the decision basis. In order to make decisions with, on the whole, some degree of rationality, certain information is required. This information can be specified using the five *information precedents*, which match the considerations listed above: information about goals, means, situation, prognosis for the relation between goals and means (prognosis) and prognosis for the development of the situation (situation prognosis).¹⁰⁾

The rationale of decision-making discussed so far applies to both the decision-making process and the administrative process. Later, the two processes

5) Cf. Ramström 1969, p. 13 f.

6) Cf. Simon 1957a, p. 75 ff.; March-Simon 1958, p. 138 f.

7) Taylor 1965, p. 60.

8) Downs 1967, pp. 3, 75 ff.; Taylor 1965, *passim*.

9) Cf. Ramström 1969, p. 16 ff., cf. George 1967 p. 12.

10) Cf. Langefors 1968, p. 66 f.; Ramström 1969, p. 11 ff.

will be discussed separately: the decision-making process with regard to goal formulation,¹¹⁾ and the administrative process with regard to various types of administrative decisions. The relations of the latter process to steering and review are discussed in the two remaining sections of this chapter (cf. 1.3 and 1.4).

The decision maker is supposed to formulate the organization's objectives. He is dependent on information from his environment and from other actors in the organization. Thus, the implementer can well exercise a decisive influence on the organization's objectives.¹²⁾ A common way of approaching the analysis of the objectives of an organization lies in the use of means-end-hierarchies.¹³⁾ It is then supposed that the actor can fit his means and goals into the different levels of such a scheme. It can be assumed that a decision maker acting with bounded rationality can hardly hope to achieve a completely formulated means-end-hierarchy. However, he is presumed to be able to achieve some form of roughly delimited, more or less explicitly formulated, scheme. He can then use this scheme as an aid to his decision-making. In an analysis of the organization, this scheme can be reconstructed as a mapping of the actor's objectives and of his concepts of the relations between different means and goals.¹⁴⁾ When attempts are made to reconstruct such a means-end-hierarchy, proper consideration — as pointed out above — should be paid to all the difficulties caused by the problems of rationality.¹⁵⁾

The administrative process is the object of steering and review by the decision maker and, in addition, receives information from the environment. Most interestingly in this context, however, the implementer suborganization makes decisions that, so to speak, are found on different levels i.e.:

- (1) the administrative decisions that decide the output of the organization.
- (2) the administrative decisions that are directed to another part of the organization; for instance, the decisions involved in the preparation of the decision maker's decisions.
- (3) the administrative decisions that remain within the implementation suborganization; for instance, decisions concerning different types of internal matters, i.e. appointment instructions etc.

The direct steering discussed below concerns the output of the implementation suborganization i.e.: decisions according to points (1) and (2).

11) For a more detailed discussion of goal formulation problems with an extensive literature survey, see Melesko 1970.

12) Cf. Lundquist 1971, p. 38 ff.

13) Cf. Perrow 1968, p. 305; Simon 1957a, p. 63; Stymne 1970, pp. 11, 54 f.; Wallroth 1968, p. 110 ff.

14) Cf. Simon 1957a, p. 63; Stymne 1970, p. 54 ff.

15) Cf. Langefors 1968, pp. 13, 20.

1.3 Steering

Steering is defined as the conscious attempts of the decision maker to influence implementation in a desired direction.¹⁾ Three steering problems are discussed in more detail below: (1) the qualities of the steering forms, (2) the relations of the steering forms to the variables in the administrative process, and (3) the reliability of the steering and the rationality of the decision.

If the key variables of the control process are expressed in steering terms, the following are obtained: *steering subjects* consisting of the decision maker and possible steering units; *steering objects*, which are the variables in the administrative process; and *steering forms* (simply called steering) which are the types (and in the matter of indirect steering also the content) of communications through which steering takes place.²⁾ Re-steering, which has the same qualities as other forms of steering, is discussed together with the review mechanism in the next section (cf. 1.4). As pointed out earlier, steering problems can be found in several places in the organization; for instance, they are involved in the steering between decision maker and steering units.³⁾ To simplify things, this steering is presumed to be reliable (as is all other steering that does not concern the relation between decision-maker and implementer). This stipulation can be seen as a result of the desire to keep the model as simple as possible.

Four different dimensions can be described in a property space containing the properties of the various forms of steering. These dimensions are listed below. The last three of them refer to the formulation of steering communications. They are:

(1) *the material content of the steering*

(2) *direct and indirect steering*. With direct steering, the implementer is given goals and/or means for the implementation suborganization's output. Indirect steering is meant to influence the implementation in ways other than by providing goals and/or means, i.e. by influencing the implementer's ability and/or will to carry out the direct steering.⁴⁾

(3) *specific and general steering*. With specific steering, the decision maker intends to influence one implementation decision only, whereas with general steering, he wishes to influence all implementation decisions in general or all decisions of a certain type.⁵⁾

(4) *precise — imprecise steering*. Each form of steering includes a continuum from the most precise indication to the most imprecise indication of the

1) Cf. Ramström 1969, p. 52; Langefors 1968, p. 17; Rhenman 1964, p. 6.

2) Cf. Lundquist 1971, Chapter 2.

3) Cf. Downs 1967, p. 148 ff.

4) Cf. Lundquist 1971, p. 28 ff.

5) Ibid; cf. Cartwright 1965, p. 24.

methods that the decision maker would like the implementer to use. The less precise the steering, the greater is the scope given to the implementer to make an impression on the organization's output.⁶⁾

These four dimensions provide a property space from which different forms of steering can be derived. By combining direct steering with the dimension called specific and general steering, one can obtain *order-steering* and *rule-steering*. With the former, the steering communication covers goals and/or means for an individual case; with the latter, it covers goals and/or means for all implementation cases of a specific type.⁷⁾ In the latter form, the implementer is thus given a rule that he must apply to individual cases.⁸⁾

Indirect steering can be viewed in many different ways. From the point of view of its material content one can split it into *recruitment-steering* and *form-steering*. Recruitment-steering indicates that the decision maker employs or establishes the bases for the employment of personnel in the implementation suborganization. Form-steering covers the formation of the implementer's organization, processes, personnel conditions, and territory. Both form-steering and recruitment-steering are mostly used in a general manner. The two forms can be used specifically: for instance, with regard to recruitment-steering if an official is employed to make one implementation decision only and is then dismissed. Two more indirect steering forms can be derived from consideration of the material content of the steering. These are *financial-steering* and *information-steering*, both of which can be used in a specific and a general manner. Financial-steering includes the money required for the operation of the implementation suborganization and the execution of the organization's output. If the implementer lacks his own resources, as is usually the case, he is completely dependent on financial-steering for his activity. Information-steering can be interpreted as a variable that includes all the other indirect steering possibilities not mentioned above. The decision maker can use information-steering to vary the extent to which he sets his imprint on the implementer's decision basis. Training-steering, where the decision maker can "indoctrinate" the implementation personnel, can be seen as a special form of information-steering. Information-steering can also be used to strengthen the decision maker's influence on the implementer.⁹⁾ This is discussed in more detail below. Indirect forms of steering can also range from extreme vagueness to great precision in their prescription of the methods to be used.

6) Cf. Downs 1967, p. 133 ff.; Cartwright 1965, p. 24; Ramström 1967, p. 114 ff.

7) Lundquist 1971, p. 28 f.

8) Sometimes, the literature contains constructions in which the direct steering forms are distinguished according to their degree of precision. Ramström, for instance, determines three points on this continuum between the most precise and the most imprecise steering; i.e. goal-steering, where the implementation goal is indicated and the implementer's freedom of action is thus very great; frame-steering, which can be said to be a mid-position where the boundaries for permitted behaviour are stipulated; and programme-steering, which approaches a precise indication of the activities to be undertaken and where the implementer is given very little scope of action – Ramström 1967, p. 67.

9) Lundquist 1971, p. 28 ff.

Material content is not included in direct steering, but is restricted to a special variable called *subject areas*. This offers considerable classification problems; these are discussed in more detail in the following two chapters.

The decision maker can use steering to influence all three variables in the administrative process, i.e. the decision basis, the decision rule, and the resources. Direct steering is aimed at the decision rule. When direct steering specifies goals or means for the organization's output, it "locks" the decision rule in the position indicated in the steering communication. If the steering indicates means precisely, the calculations of the bounded rationality decision maker will be "locked" in a position where he merely has to carry out the steering communication. If, instead, the steering is imprecise, he will perform every item in the calculation except for goal formulation, which the steering has already "locked" by indicating the goal for output. Of the indirect steering forms, recruitment and information steering affect the decision basis; and financial, form, and recruitment steering (which thus influences two variables) affect the resources. The latter three forms also influence the decision basis and the decision rule through their effect on the resources.¹⁰⁾ The above reasoning about direct steering presumes a situation where the steering is reliable.

In reality it is by no means certain that the decision maker's steering will result in the desired behaviour of the implementer or that it will achieve the desired outcomes. The questions of the reliability of the steering and the rationality of the decision are two of the essential problems of steering. The *reliability* of the steering is defined as the difference between the decision and the way it is implemented. No difference exists between them when the steering is absolutely reliable.¹¹⁾ The *rationality* of the decision is defined as the difference between the intended outcome (the goal) and the result achieved (the outcome), when the steering is presumed to be reliable. There is no difference between the goal and the actual outcome when a decision is, subjectively, "completely" rational.

Because the model assumes that the decision maker's information is incomplete, the consequent loss of rationality in his decision-making can be expected to lead to deviations between goals and outcomes. No analysis of this problem is attempted here; it is sufficient to point out the difficulties of empirical measurement. When a deviation between goals and outcomes is detected in a real-life situation, how large a part of this must be ascribed to the lack of reliability in the steering?

The reliability of the steering is discussed in somewhat more detail below, based on two different situations. The first implies that the implementer tries

10) Ibid., p. 76 ff.

11) Cf. Ramström 1969, p. 54; Rehnman 1964, p. 14 ff.

to carry out the decision, but for some reason is unable to do so. This could be, for instance, because he does not understand the intentions underlying the decision, because he lacks the resources necessary for its execution, or because the decision simply cannot be executed.¹²⁾ It can also be that the steering communication does not reach him in the form intended; and this can be due to deficiencies in the transmission; for instance the poor quality of the communication channel.

The second situation implies that the implementer consciously diverges from the steering, although he has correctly understood it. There is in this case a power problem, which is well worth closer examination. If the angle of approach is changed to that of the implementer, one can formulate the problem by posing the question: why does the implementer obey the decision maker's steering? For the large organization, which is involved here, at least three sets of reasons can be imagined:¹³⁾

- (1) the implementer obeys for fear of penalty or wish for reward.
- (2) the implementer obeys because he believes the decision to be rational or because it agrees with his evaluations.
- (3) the implementer obeys because he appreciates the decision maker personally or because he always obeys the steering communications from certain organization roles, irrespective of who occupies the role.

If we attempt to analyse these three different sets of reasons for obedience from the standpoint of the decision maker, we primarily face the question which forms of power or influence make the implementer follow or obey the steering. In the very extensive influence literature, there are several different classifications of these forms; however, in this context, there is little reason to discuss them more closely.¹⁴⁾ None the less, we can with profit pause to consider the last two of the three sets of reasons for obedience listed above. When the implementer obeys because he understands a decision to be rational, it usually means that the decision maker exercises expert power. When the implementer obeys according to the various reasons in the third set, the decision maker is considered to exercise authority over the implementer. In Weber's example, authority is defined as a special form of power. If the implementer obeys because he appreciates the decision maker personally, it is charismatic authority; if he always obeys certain roles, the occupier of the decision-making role exercises either traditional or legal authority. In practice the various forms of authority can be combined together. Legal authority is usually mentioned as the most important in the large modern organization.¹⁵⁾

12) Ibid. Cf. Riggs 1968, p. 50 ff.; Stymne 1970, p. 84.

13) Cf. Cartwright 1965, pp. 12 ff., 28 ff.; Etzioni 1966, p. 82 ff; Easton 1968, p. 287.

14) Cf. Dahl 1968, p. 412.

15) Cf. Etzioni 1966, p. 84 ff.; Simon 1957a, p. 22.

The decision maker is presumed to use steering as an instrument to obtain power over the organization. In what ways can the various steering forms be related to the different reasons for obedience? Manipulation of penalties or rewards can be made through information-steering; for instance, by advising the implementer what to expect if he diverges from the steering or if he follows the steering well. However, this form of power is thought to have great limitations and can hardly of itself produce reliable steering in a large organization. A considerably better guarantee for reliable steering would be if the implementer shared the evaluations of the decision maker or understood him to be rational. Information-steering can function here too. It allows the decision maker to determine to some extent the content of the information that the implementer has access to. In this way the implementer's possibilities of formulating alternatives to the steering are reduced. Recruitment-steering can function similarly. At the same time as the decision maker selects a certain official to do the implementation, he also chooses a certain decision basis for the implementation, i.e. the evaluations and knowledge of the official. This will naturally influence the administrative process. Where the decision maker exercises a high degree of authority over the implementer, this offers a perhaps even greater guarantee of reliability. This authority relation can also be influenced by information-steering, because the implementer's interpretation of the authority situation must depend on his information. In the large modern organization, all these power forms can be expected to occur side by side.¹⁶⁾

1.4 Review

Consequently it cannot automatically be presumed that correctly formulated steering will be correctly implemented (the reliability problem), or that reliable steering will have the intended outcomes (the rationality problem). The decision maker therefore depends on a mechanism that can inform him of possible deviations. This mechanism can be called *review*¹⁾ and is defined as the conscious attempts of the decision maker to obtain information about the reliability of the steering and the rationality of the decision. Problems of review are discussed below under three headings: (1) review forms, (2) the effectiveness and scope of review, and (3) re-steering.

If the key variables of the control process are expressed in review terms, we have *review subjects* consisting of the decision maker and possible review units, *review objects* which are the administrative process, the implementation decision, and the outcomes of the output, and finally *review forms*

16) Cf. Cartwright 1965, pp. 12 f., 28 ff.; Etzioni 1966, p. 83 ff.; Blau-Scott 1963, p. 140 ff.

1) Usually, the literature does not contain the sharp distinction between steering and review that is fundamental to this dissertation; normally, the word "control" is used for both concepts (cf. Ramström 1969, p. 70). It can also happen that "control" is given a restricted meaning corresponding to "review" as it is used here (cf. Strong-Smith 1968, pp. ix, 2 f.; Etzioni 1966, p. 43.).

(usually abbreviated to review) which are the activities through which the review is carried out.²⁾ The review forms can be analysed on the basis of the information they provide concerning the review object.³⁾ It is from this information aspect that the review can be interpreted as a form of institutionalized feedback.

The property space of the review forms will here contain two dimensions concerned with the object of the review and with who takes the initiative in the review, respectively:

(1) the *review object*. In a review of the reliability of the steering, the review is directed at the administrative process — the *process review*, or at the administrative decision — the *decision review*. In a review of the rationality of the decision, the review is directed at the outcomes of the implementation — the *outcome review*. The outcomes of the output of the organization are of special interest.

(2) the *review initiative*. In an *active review*, the initiative is taken by the review subject. In a *passive review*, the initiative is taken by someone else: a suborganization or an individual.⁴⁾

The review can be analysed with regard to its *effectiveness*. An absolutely effective review identifies all the deviations in the implementation cases that are the object of the review. The effectiveness of the review can thus be measured as the difference between the number of deviations that have occurred and the number that have been indicated in the implementation cases that have been reviewed. The review can also be analysed on the basis of its *scope*. The more implementation cases that are the object of review, the more extensive is the review.

When the decision maker determines his review strategy, he is faced primarily with a cost problem. A prerequisite for achieving a higher degree of rationality is that the review should cover all implementation cases and that it should correctly identify all deviations. This means that it must be both of total scope and of absolute effectiveness, which must result in big costs. In order to reduce these costs to some extent, various restrictions in the scope of the review can be imagined; for instance, that only reliability is reviewed or only rationality, or that the reviews are carried out as some form of random test etc. One possibility is to choose the less cost-demanding passive review, which is initiated outside the organization management.⁵⁾ In the choice of control strategy, the implementer cannot be ignored either. For instance, sometimes the mere occurrence of reviews that are too extensive and effective can reduce the motivation of the implementer.⁶⁾

2) Cf. Lundquist 1971, Chapter 6.

3) Cf. Ramström 1967, p. 56.

4) Lundquist 1971, Chapter 6.

5) Cf. Downs 1967, p. 146 f.

6) Cf. *ibid.*, p. 147.

The review information supplied to the decision maker can show that the review has either detected deviations or has failed to indicate any (cf. Fig. 4). When a deviation has been identified, the decision maker (or steering and review units) can *re-steer* the implementation. Re-steering is a form of steering that comes into operation as a result of a deviation-indicating review. Otherwise, re-steering can be executed through some of the other forms of steering discussed above (cf. 1.3). The question of how to construct re-steering in case of deviation from the direct steering is a matter that will have to be touched upon: re-steering does not necessarily imply the use of order-steering. One can suppose, for instance, that re-steering could require that an implementation decision that had deviated from the steering should be nullified. An attempt could then be made to use some form of indirect steering to get the implementer to produce an acceptable implementation.

1.5 Summary

The first chapter presents the premises for the scheme of analysis presented later, and the first step in the delimitation of the decentralization variables. The variables involved in communication from decision maker to implementer in a large organization are identified using the communication paradigm. The variables are summarized in the control process, which includes the decision-making process, steering (with re-steering), the administrative process, and review. The decision maker's chances of achieving his goals depend on the rationality of the decision and the reliability of the steering, as well as on the effectiveness and scope of the review.

Chapter 2

Transfer of allocation of values

This dissertation can be regarded as a preparatory work for a theory which is presumed to involve the following basic set of questions: what variables are involved in the means of decentralization, and what goals can the decision maker achieve with the use of these variables? The construction of the control process and the survey of its variables are elements leading to an answer to the question: what variables are involved in the means of decentralization? The next step is to describe all the variables in the means *transfer of allocation of values*. Decentralization is a submeans to this.

By allocation of values we mean those things which the organization distributes to individuals in its environment which they, in a broad sense, value — this refers to both costs and benefits. *Transfer of allocation of values* indicates that the decision about the allocation of values is transferred from the decision maker to the implementer for execution. The decision maker's instruments for doing this are steering and review: *therefore, his decision about a certain transfer of allocation of values can be described as the establishment of a steering-review constellation*. To indicate the content of such a constellation, one can say that it includes answers to questions such as “who is to implement the decisions?”, “which decisions are to be implemented by which implementer?”, and “what freedom of action is to be allowed the implementer in the performance of his task?”

From the decision rule of the bounded rationality decision maker appear the variables that are involved in the decision, namely goals, means, prognosis, situation, and situation prognosis. This chapter discusses the first two variables, goals and means, involved in the transfer of allocation of values. In particular it concentrates on an analysis of the means. The variables described are meant to refer to the organization which is the object of study of this dissertation, i.e. the political system.

2.1 The political process

The organization model, presented in the first chapter, was given some qualities that would make it easy to adapt to the political system. However,

there are also reasons to seek for points of attachment in some more generally known and — at least, from the aspect of terminology — generally applied political model. David Easton's version of systems theory has been chosen for this purpose because its basic concepts are easily adapted to analysis orientations that do not have Easton's theoretical basic points.¹⁾ In view of the use of these concepts, it is important to re-iterate that no presentation of systems theory is intended in the Easton sense. The systems theory merely provides the concepts from which the means and goals model is formulated. The advantage of seeking points of reference to a well-known model is thought to be that the decentralization problems can then be immediately identified by the political scientist.

As an introduction, some of Easton's basic concepts are now presented. Special attention is devoted to the phenomenon of the political subsystem. This is because Easton has shown only peripheral interest in parapolitical systems; systems which closely correspond to the subsystems described here.

The political process implies that the demands and support of members of society are included as input in the political system, where by means of the conversion process, they are formulated into an output consisting of decisions and actions. The outcomes of the system's output are reported back to the system in the form of feedback. The conversion process consists of a number of items of which the last two: making and implementing the decisions of the system, are of the greatest interest in this context, because the decentralization problem can be studied as a relation between decision maker and implementer.

2.1.1 The authoritative allocation of values

The basis for Easton's reasoning is *the society*, which is defined as the sum of interactions between individuals delimited in some way.²⁾ For the purpose of this dissertation, the territory is a suitable delimitation criterion; consequently, society includes all social interactions in a specific geographical area. Further delimitations on territorial basis can be made in the society, whereby *subsocieties* are obtained; these include all social activities between the individuals in a subarea of the social territory.

From the total number of social activities, those that in some way interact can be analytically delimited to a *system*. There are many such systems. They may overlap one another to differing degrees because an individual activity can be referred to more than one analytical system. Easton specially emphasizes the analytical nature of the systems and is of the opinion that they have an obvious empirical relevance, although they only isolate parts of the reality.³⁾

1) Damgaard 1972, p. 107 f. cf. Dahl-Jacobsen 1964 *passim*.

2) Easton 1965a, pp. 35 f., 67 f.

3) *Ibid.*, p. 45.

The political system is one of the many conceivable systems that society embraces. The political system includes all the activities that are "predominantly oriented towards the authoritative allocation of values for a society".⁴⁾ Authoritative allocation of values merely implies that the members of society are allocated by the political system those things that, in a broad sense, they value.⁵⁾ That the allocation of values is authoritative means that most members of society interpret it as binding, i.e. they obey it. It is this binding character of the political allocation of values that, according to Easton, constitutes the decisive difference between the political system and other social activities.⁶⁾

When we try to operationalize Easton's definition of the political system, we encounter considerable difficulties. One possible way of by-passing these problems is to provide the definition with further criteria. Almond and Powell, for instance, in relation to Max Weber, point out that the legitimate exercise of physical violence is characteristic of the political system.⁷⁾ In concrete cases, it is, none the less, difficult to decide whether a certain phenomenon should be regarded as part of the political system. However, in this context, there is no reason to attach any decisive importance to these boundary problems, especially as explicit and meaningful alternatives to Easton are lacking.

The political system corresponds to the organization model sketched in Chapter 1. The expression *the authorities* corresponds to the decision maker (with steering and review units) and the implementer. The authorities perform the various roles "through which the major responsibilities for managing the political affairs of the groups are exercised".⁸⁾ The terms of the organization model are kept for the two main types of roles, decision maker and implementer. The transfer problems now concern the relation between the authoritative decision maker and the implementer, and this relation can therefore be defined in terms of *the political control process*. In relation to the model in Chapter 1, this process consists of a decision-making process, an administrative process, and the decision maker's steering and review of the implementation.

The political system exists in an environment that consists of all remaining social activities. The system communicates with its environment partly by an *input*, composed of demands and support by members of society on the political system,⁹⁾ and partly by an *output*, which "produced by the authorities include the binding decisions, their implementing actions and . . . certain associated kinds of behavior".¹⁰⁾ This description of the political system's output, however, provides no guidance for conclusions about its content. Of the

4) Ibid., p. 50.

5) Sjöblom 1968, p. 20., cf. Berg 1971, p. 221 ff., Easton 1968, p. 286 f.

6) Easton 1965a, p. 50.

7) Almond-Powell 1966, p. 17 f.

8) Easton 1965a p. 54.

9) Easton 1965b p. 25 ff.

10) Ibid. p. 351.

attempts to classify output that can be found in the literature, the following categorization by Almond—Powell is one of the more interesting: *Extracting output* consists of the activities through which the political system extracts resources from its environment. This is usually done by taking contributions, for instance, in the form of taxes and also by taking services from its environment. *Regulating output* consists of the various rules, laws, decrees, etc., which the political system imposes on members of society. To this form of output should also be reckoned the activities through which the system imposes its rules on society and checks that they are observed. *Distributing output* is the political system's distribution of goods, services, and "opportunities, honours, statuses, and the like". *Symbolic output* refers to such things as "affirmations of values, displays of political symbols, statements of policies and intents" and so on.¹¹⁾

2.1.2 Political subsystems

A number of subsystems can be defined within the political system. It is organizations of various kinds in their political (i.e. related to the authoritative allocation of values) aspect. It can refer to the church, business enterprises, trades unions etc. These subsystems also attend to an allocation of values, which is interpreted by their members as binding. In their role as "internal" allocators of values, such organizations can be restricted to what Easton calls *parapolitical systems*. They differ from the political system mainly in their smaller spheres of activity and their more limited resources.¹²⁾ The designation political system is reserved by Easton for "those roles and interactions relevant to the authoritative allocations for a society as a whole".¹³⁾

A special type of parapolitical system attends to the implementation of certain authoritative allocations of values for a subsociety. Because such political subsociety systems, or *political subsystems*, as they are called here, will occupy a central position in later reasoning, their qualities will now be defined in more detail. The political subsystem has the implementation of authoritative allocation of values as its principal function, unlike other parapolitical systems such as business enterprises and trades unions. The allocation of values is attended to by the members of the subsociety themselves, either directly or through a representative body consisting of subsociety members appointed by them in some way (for instance, by election).¹⁴⁾ This distinguishes a political subsystem from other organizations that have the implementation of the authoritative allocation of values as their main func-

11) Almond-Powell 1966, p. 27; cf. Easton 1965b, p. 352 ff.

12) Easton 1965a, p. 52 f.

13) Ibid., p. 56.

14) Cf. Decentralization for . . . 1962, p. 89; Stanyer 1967, p. 13 f.; Alderfer 1967, p. 53; Leemans 1967, p. 14; Meyer 1957, p. 56 f.

tion, but whose managements are appointed by the decision maker and do not need to be recruited from the subsociety. In conclusion, we can establish three points that characterize a political subsystem and separate it from other parapolitical systems:

- (1) it has the implementation of authoritative allocation of values as its main function.
- (2) its area of implementation is restricted to a subsociety.
- (3) its implementation is attended to by the subsociety members themselves; either directly or through a representative body of subsociety members appointed by them.

One problem is how to relate a political subsystem to the political system. This raises the question of whether the subsystem is seen as a part of the political system or as a subsystem independent of the system. "Subsystem" is an abbreviation of the term "the subsociety's political system", so its use here does not imply that it is necessarily seen as a part of the political system. If we consider Easton's definition of a political system as including those roles and interactions relevant to the authoritative allocation of values for society as a whole, it is very uncertain whether the subsystem should be counted as part of the system. A solution of the problem can perhaps be suggested by considering the steering aspect. The authoritative decisions are made by the decision makers of the political system and then transferred, possibly via steering units, to political subsystems for execution. The subsystem can thus be given more or less freedom of action depending on the degree of steering. When the freedom of action is slight, the subsystem, in accordance with Easton's definition, should be seen as part of the political system. However, this does not necessarily apply when the subsystem is given considerable freedom of action.

2.2 The transfer variables

The argument which follows is based on the control process model, which offers two relevant variables, namely steering and review. As a first step, the means "transfer of allocation of values" can thus be differentiated on steering and review. As shown earlier (cf. 1.3 and 1.4) these two variables are particularly complicated and require a further breakdown if they are to be used as a basis for an analysis of such a transfer. This applies to steering in particular. However, the property space presented earlier (cf. 1.3) can easily be used to divide steering into subvariables. A social level aspect (society—subsociety) and an organizational aspect (system—subsystem) are also introduced into the analysis. A schematic table of the procedure is presented in Fig. 5, which can be studied in parallel with the running text. After

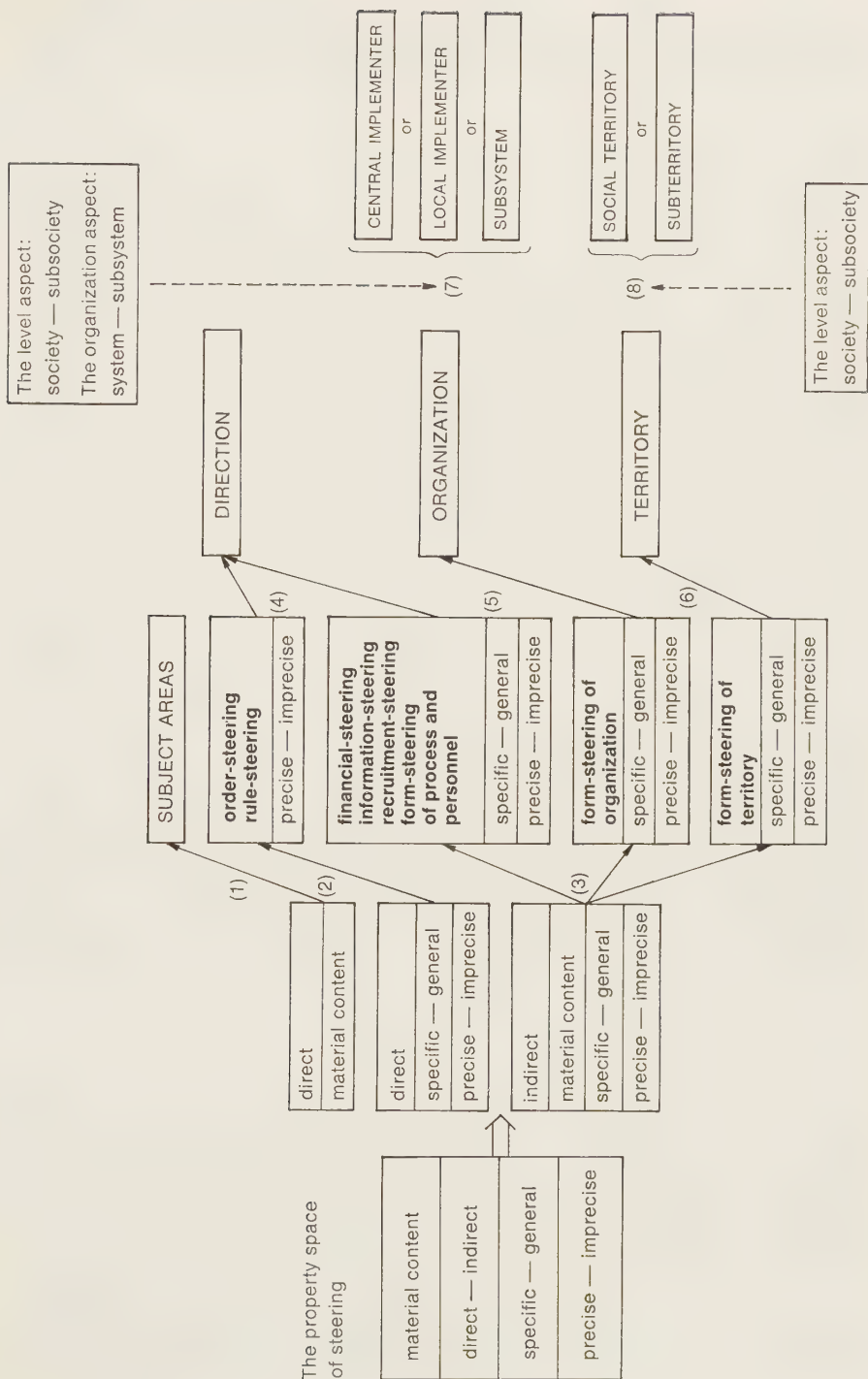


Fig. 5. Derivation of transfer variables from steering

the transfer variables have been produced, they are used as a basis for the differentiation of the transfer means on its three main alternatives.

2.2.1 Delimitation of the transfer variables

(1) the material content of the direct steering is divided into *subject areas*. This new subvariable is too complicated to be used in detailed analysis, however, and one meets severe difficulties when one attempts to classify these subject areas. A possible way out is to refer to Almond—Powell's output types (cf. 2.1.1) and so obtain subject areas that cover extracting output, distributing output, regulating output, and symbolic output. Another possible basis for classification of the subject area is its content. Subject areas derived from a "content division" are, for instance, social policy, defence policy, and environmental policy. A third way of dividing up subject areas is based on "the ends and purposes of government", which, according to an author quoted by Easton, are "(i) external security, (ii) internal order, (iii) justice, (iv) general welfare, and (v) freedom". Similar types of catalogues of ends often occur in the literature.¹⁾

(2) direct steering can also be analysed in terms of the dimensions specific — general and precise — imprecise. On the basis of the former dimension, the steering forms order-steering and rule-steering can be derived. They can both vary in their degree of precision (cf. 1.3).

(3) the indirect steering is divided into four indirect steering forms. These are form-steering, recruitment-steering, financial-steering and information-steering, all of which can be used both specifically and generally. All four forms can vary in their degree of precision. There are four types of form-steering (organization, process, personnel, and territory). Two of these forms are dealt with in particular, namely organizational form-steering and territorial form-steering.

(4) order-steering, rule-steering, and the indirect steering forms — except for form-steering of organization and territory — are designated: *direction*, which is thus particularly complicated. In discussing the implementer's freedom of action, one can make an approximation by considering the positions of the dimensions (direct — indirect, specific — general, and precise — imprecise) in the property space of the steering.

(5) form-steering of organization is designated by the term: *organization*. It means that the decision maker can form or choose the implementing organization.

1) Easton 1965b, p. 356 f.

(6) form-steering of territory is designated by the term: *territory*, which means that the decision maker can choose or superficially determine the territory of the social sphere embraced by the implementation.

So far, the organization model has been sufficient. For a further breakdown, which is necessary if the transfer variables are to be of interest for an analysis of the political system, more variables must be introduced. The first one relates to point (6) where a division into levels is indicated. An allocation of values may apply to the whole society (central level) or only to a subsociety (local level). Empirically, the number of levels changes from one society to the other. Three levels might be most common in so-called unitary states, where a "transfer of allocation of values" could be made to central, regional, or local levels.²⁾ In order to avoid complicating the model unnecessarily, two levels, central and local, are chosen. This is justified by the argument that the introduction of more levels will not result in any fundamental difference. The level aspect permits a further differentiation:

(7) the variable "territory" can then cover two alternative types of area: the social territory, where the transferred allocation of values refers to the whole society; and the subterritory, where the allocation of values refers to a subsociety.

A second differentiation can be made using the distinction between political system and political subsystems. If this distinction is combined with the division between society and subsociety made above, a matrix is obtained, one of whose dimensions shows that the allocation of values is implemented by the political system or the political subsystem, and whose second dimension shows that the allocation of values is made to society or subsociety. This allows one to split the variable "organization" into three main types (cf. Fig. 6).

	political system	political subsystem
society	CENTRAL IMPLEMENTER	
subsociety	LOCAL IMPLEMENTER	SUBSYSTEM

Fig. 6. Differentiation of the variable "organization"

2) cf. Humes-Martin 1961, p. 12 ff.; Alderfer 1967, p. 55; Decentralization for ... 1962, *passim*; Meyer 1957, p. 245 f.

(8) the variable “organization” can be split into three types: *central-implementer*, who in the political system implements allocation of values for the society; *local-implementer*, who in the political system implements allocation of values for the subsociety; and *subsystem*, which implements allocation of values for the subsociety.

(9) apart from the steering variables already mentioned, the means “transfer of allocation of values” includes yet another variable, namely *review*, which can be used with each of the four variables derivated from steering, i.e. subject area, direction, territory, and organization.

2.2.2 The alternative means

The various transfer variables can be arranged in three constellations on the basis of organizational and territorial alternatives. These three constellations are termed *concentration*, *deconcentration* and *decentralization* and can be regarded as the principal alternative ways of “transfer of value allocation”. The three terms describe either that (1) allocation of values is *transferred* to a certain organization or that (2) allocation of values is *implemented* by a certain organization. According to (1), the alternative ways of doing this are by:

- (1) *centralization*, which implies that allocation of values is transferred to an organization in the political system for implementation.
- (2) *decentralization*, which implies that allocation of values is transferred to political subsystems for implementation.

As Fig. 6 shows, the centralized allocation of values can be implemented at both central and local level, whereas the decentralized allocation of values can only be implemented at local level. There are thus two forms of centralized allocation of values concerning the execution level, namely:

- (1a) *concentration*, which implies that allocation of values is transferred for implementation to organizations at the central level (central-implementer) of the political system.
- (1b) *deconcentration*, which implies that allocation of values is transferred for implementation to organizations at the local level (local-implementer) of the political system.

From this point of view, there are thus three main ways of transferring allocation of values: concentration, deconcentration, and decentralization.³⁾ The literature usually calls the political subsystem “local government”, “local

3) Terminology from Meyer 1957, p. 56 f.

self-government”, “local representative government”, or similar.⁴⁾ The local-implementer is referred to as a “field agency” or a “field service”.⁵⁾ The central-implementer can be a “department”, a “ministry”, a “central agency”, and so on. The decision maker can also transfer the implementation of the authoritative allocation of values to other organizations in society, for instance, to trades unions. This form of transfer will not be taken into account in this study, as it appears to be peripheral in relation to the three main alternatives.

When the decision maker determines the form of the transfer of allocation of values, he has access to three principal means of doing so. Each of these means comprises five variables (cf. Fig. 7), of which the social territory is a constant, however, at least in the short term.

Transfer variables	Centralization		Decentralization
	concentration	deconcentration	
subject areas direction review organization territory	subject areas direction review central-implementer social territory	subject areas direction review local-implementer subterritory	subject areas direction review subsystem subterritory

Fig. 7. The variables of the three principal means of transfer

The three principal means of transfer allow the same degree of variation to the variables: subject areas, direction and review. However, variation in organization and territory is to some extent restricted. All these variables can be split into subvariables.

2.3 Means and goals in the transfer of allocation of values

By varying the transfer variables, the decision maker can determine how the authoritative allocation of values is to be implemented.¹⁾ From the point of view taken here, he establishes a certain set of values on the transfer variables with the object of achieving certain goals. However, his freedom of action is likely to be constrained by variables in the decision calculation, the situation and the situation prognosis.²⁾ The following quotation gives an example of the importance of the situation in its effect on decentralization.

4) Humes-Martin 1961, p. 3 f.; Stanyer 1967, p. 12.
5) Cf. Alderfer 1967, p. 3; Maddick 1963, p. 24; Fesler 1968, p. 371.
1) Cf. Humes-Martin 1961, p. 31 ff.; Alderfer 1967, p. 54; Litterer 1968, p. 338.
2) Cf. Fesler 1968, p. 372 f.; Leemans 1967, p. 32 f.

It can change the areas, the powers conferred, and the structure by which they are exercised. However, the existence in a country of a strong tradition of territorial self-government may become a quasi-federal guarantee that the local units will not be abolished or deprived of substantial power.³⁾

It is not merely that the decision maker has his freedom of action restricted by the political power conditions in society; any change of situation may affect the outcomes intended in a given choice of courses of action. One can perhaps use procedures similar to those already used to delimit the means variables to construct outcome schemes. However, the situation restricts the range of possible outcomes and so aggravates the difficulties of devising such schemes. The next stage of this analysis is devoted to goal problems and includes a proposed means-goals scheme and a discussion on the relation between means of transfer and goals. An example of how transfer goals can be classified is followed by some hypothesis on why one or the other principal means of transfer is chosen.

2.3.1 The means-end-hierarchy

Goals and outcomes are found on several “levels”. The goals can be arranged in means-end-hierarchies (cf. 1.2) and the outcomes in chains of cause and effect. In the transfer of allocation of values, the goal-hierarchy seems to be of considerable “depth”. According to Maass, a transfer to local level is “always associated intimately with the basic values of the community; areal division of powers is an instrument for realizing these values”.⁴⁾ If the ultimate goals consist of basic social values, there are reasons to presume that there can be several intermediate goal levels between the means used and the ultimate goals. No definition of these intermediate goal levels will be made, however. A crudely drawn means-end-hierarchy will be used as the analytical instrument; this being compatible with a situation of bounded rationality.

The means-end-hierarchy can be divided into three main levels called the means, the conditions, and the values. The means consist of the transfer variables. The goals extend from the means up to and including the ultimate goals, which are here called *values*. The values are presumed to be very generally expressed and particularly difficult to operationalize. There are intermediate goals between the means and the values; these are called *conditions* and can stand in hierarchical relation to one another at the “condition level”. By conditions we mean the immediately desired outcomes of the use of a particular means. One cannot really draw a theoretical boundary between conditions and values in a manner which can be put into operation; instead, this boundary is presumed to be an empirical decision.

3) MacMahon 1961, p. 20.

4) Maass 1959, p. 20; cf. Ylvisaker 1959, p. 28; Hoffmann 1959, p. 113.

Different means-end-hierarchies can merge into one another (cf. Fig. 8). A condition can be thought to be achieved by several means, and different conditions can lead to the same value, just as one condition can be thought to lead to several values. The relation becomes more obvious the higher

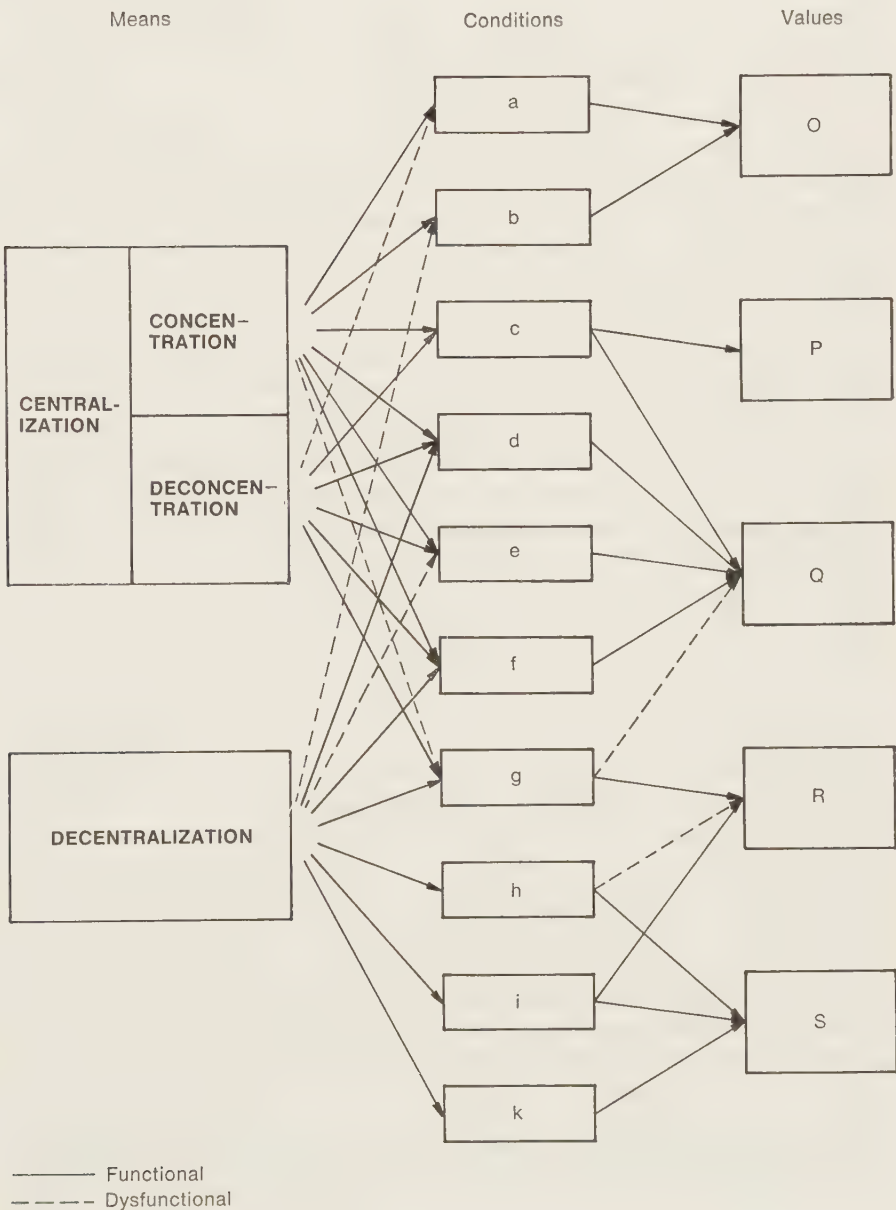


Fig. 8. The relation between transfer means and goals

we rise in a means-end-hierarchy. If the transfer variables lead to basic social values, they will have goals in common with many different means.⁵⁾

An attempt to illustrate a means-end-scheme for an actor has been made in Fig. 8. This scheme has three levels: means, conditions, and values. When an actor, more or less explicitly, constructs his scheme, he encounters decisive problems on two points, namely the two prognoses that must be made: one of the relation between means and conditions; the other of the relation between conditions and values. Uncertainty prevails in both cases for the decision maker operating with bounded rationality. In this case, however, there is no need to elaborate any differences that may exist between goals and outcomes. It is enough to know that the outcomes achieved are likely to deviate from the goals. For the following reasoning, it does not matter much whether the decision maker's prognoses are correct or not.

A means can stand in any one of three different relations to a goal. It can be functional, dysfunctional, or neutral. If the decision maker has set up a number of goals, a means can be functional to some goals at the same time as it is dysfunctional or neutral towards others. By introducing a certain means one can thus obtain both desired and undesired outcomes. The decision maker sets up his values ($O - S$) which he operationalizes in the conditions ($a - k$); he then judges which variations of the means — in this case, concentration, deconcentration, and decentralization — are required to obtain the conditions and thus the values.

2.3.2 Transfer goals

One possible way of classifying values and conditions is to relate them to causal or functional means. This procedure naturally gives no information about the content of the goal. Fig. 8 illustrates some typical cases:

- the value is obtained through all three principal means of transfer and is called *transfer value* (Q)
- the value is obtained through concentration or deconcentration and is called *centralization value* (P)
- the value is obtained through deconcentration or decentralization and is called *proximity value* (R)
- the value is obtained only through decentralization and is called *decentralization value* (S)
- the value is obtained only through concentration and is called *concentration value* (O).

5) Cf. Melesko 1970, p. 2:8 f.; Stymne 1970, p. 55.

Two possible alternatives remain, which are not illustrated in the figure, namely:

- the value is obtained only through deconcentration and is called *deconcentration value*
- the value is obtained through concentration or decentralization, but this seems unlikely.

One can apply similar reasoning to the relations between means and conditions.

2.3.3 Hypotheses

The following summary on the choice of means is based on the reasoning given above: in a society which makes both centralized and decentralized allocation of values, actors may recommend changes in the construction of implementation in order to achieve fulfilment of values by means of conditions that can be produced by or occur at the variation of any of the transfer variables.

A rationale on why a certain means of transfer is chosen can suitably be based on the differences present in the three sets of variables. The three principal means of transfer each contain three variables; namely, subject areas, direction, and review, where the decision maker, in principle, has the same variation possibilities, i.e. no stipulations have been made regarding the variables. The two remaining variables, territory and organization, have been given different values for different means of transfer. By comparing the differences between the variables of territory and organization for the three means, it should be possible to produce a basis for hypotheses about the objectives of the decision maker.

The difference between, on the one hand, concentration, and on the other, deconcentration and decentralization is found for the variable: territory, which in the first case is social territory, and in the second, subterritory. By using deconcentration and decentralization one can produce conditions in which the implementer is close to members of subsociety and their local problems and can analyse and understand the state of the subsociety.⁶⁾ The supposition can be formulated in the following hypothesis:

In a society with a concentrated allocation of values, actors who recommend deconcentration or decentralization (without giving priority to one means or the other) can be expected to do so in order to achieve the fulfilment of values by "proximity conditions".

Why should decentralization be preferred to deconcentration or vice versa? Their two sets of variables differ only in respect of the organization variable.

6) Cf. Sharpe 1970, p. 155.

In decentralization, the allocation of values is transferred to subsystems where the implementation is done by the members of a subsociety. In deconcentration, the allocation of values is transferred to and then implemented by the local implementer of the political system. In the former instance, elected subsociety members take part in the implementation. In the latter they do not undertake this. It can be expected that the priority is made on this basis; therefore, the following hypothesis can be proposed:

In a society with a centralized allocation of values (concentrated or deconcentrated) actors who recommend decentralization can be expected to do so in order to achieve the fulfilment of values by "participation conditions".

In a real society, as opposed to a model one, there is a blend of the three primary transfer types, which means that concentrated, deconcentrated, and decentralized allocation of values exist side by side.⁷⁾

2.4 Summary

Chapter 2 presents the transfer variables available to the decision maker of the political system and an introductory analysis of his objectives in using these variables. Three principal means of transfer are defined with the aid of the model of the control process and an analysis of "organization" and "territory". These three means are termed concentration, deconcentration and decentralization. A two level goal hierarchy is introduced. Intermediate goals are called conditions and ultimate goals are called values. An analysis is made of how the three principal transfer means can be used to achieve these goals and some hypotheses are proposed on the decision maker's choice of transfer alternatives.

7) Cf. Decentralization for . . . 1962, p. 4; Fesler 1968, p. 371; Duchacek 1970, p. 3 ff.

Chapter 3

Decentralization

Chapter two showed how the three transfer alternatives were defined on the basis of the control process and from the aspect of level and organization. The transfer alternatives were then set into a scheme of goals and means with the goal levels of conditions and values. Chapter three contains the next step towards the answer to the question "what variables are involved in the means of decentralization?" which implies the division of the five decentralization variables into subvariables. The result is a scheme of means and goals for decentralization which is called *the decentralization model*. Apart from this, chapter three contains examples of possible decentralization goals and there is a discussion on the problem of the degree of decentralization.

Whilst the analysis of transfer variables has basically been a theoretical one, the division of decentralization variables into subvariables is also based on illustrations drawn from practical solutions to problems of decentralization. These examples which are drawn from the literature are heavily dependent on their situations. However, their independent situation variables are not defined and this is a serious shortcoming if the intention is to clarify the relation between the three variables of means, situation and outcome, which is presumed by a theory of decentralization of the type intended here. Although these relations cannot be established with the present material, it should, none the less, be pointed out that the literature used consists in most cases of comparative works, in some instances of considerable range.¹⁾

3.1 The decentralization variables

Five decentralization variables: subterritory, subsystem, subject areas, direction and review have been derived. These variables are complex and will be split into subvariables. The derivation of a set of suitable subvariables focuses attention on the outcomes of the use of different means. However only the relation between the means used and the degree of decentralization is followed up systematically (cf. 3.3).

1) E.g. Humes-Martin 1961, Alderfer 1964 & 1967, Decentralization for ... 1962, Duchacek 1970, Meyer 1957, Leemans 1967.

3.1.1 Subterritory

The subterritory variable includes the possibility of varying the area of the territory of the subsociety. At the same time as the area changes, the structure of the territory will probably take on a new character. A subsystem can adapt in various ways: if, for instance, its boundary is redrawn to include or exclude a large and densely populated area. To present a parallel that is something of a caricature, one can compare these changes to the results of gerrymandering — the manipulation of constituencies — when, by changing the surface area, it is possible to obtain the most varied effects on the structure of an area.

The conditions in the subsociety's territory can be influenced in other ways. Our concern here is with what can be called localization politics: the determination of the number and distribution of vacant jobs, means of communication, railways, etc., within the subsociety. Such measures can decisively influence the capacity of the subsystem to perform its functions e.g. by widening the basis of taxation. This form of influence, however, is so indirect that it will not be included in the subterritory variable (or in any other steering variable). Instead, it will be assigned to what can be called ecological steering possibilities, which indicate that the decision maker manipulates the steering object's physical and social environment.²⁾ However, there is no denying that subterritory, as a decentralization variable, is substantially a part of this ecological steering.

By changing the area of the subterritory, we can obtain larger or smaller areas and/or an area with a different structure from the earlier one. Extension of the subterritory is usually associated with the decision maker's wish to create subsocieties that can offer the subsystem a better financial base:

It is now almost universally accepted that a local government unit needs to have a certain minimum size if it is to be financially able to carry out its functions adequately.³⁾

However, the territorial size of the subsociety limits the opportunities for its members to take part in the subsystem's allocation of values. When the territory is very large, the long distance render participation difficult. Some say that the public then have fewer opportunities to identify themselves with the subsociety, but others maintain that such an effect cannot be observed.⁴⁾

The advantage of a subsociety with large economic resources — if this can be achieved by increasing its territory — is that the decision maker's steering possibilities are reduced, i.e. the subsystem gets increased autonomy. From the point of view of participation, however, small, not too densely populated subterritories might be preferable. Between these two conceivable objectives

2) Cf. Cartwright 1965, p. 19 f.

3) Leemans 1967, p. 47; cf. Pusič 1969, p. 68.

4) Cf. Pusič 1969, p. 68.

for the subterritory variable, i.e. large size for increased resources and small size for increased participation, lies one of modern society's most notable goal conflicts concerning decentralization.⁵⁾

Three commonly used methods illustrate how the size of subterritories can be manipulated so as to achieve economically sound subsocieties:⁶⁾

(1) the merger of two or more subsociety areas into one large subsociety area. The purpose of such a merger is to achieve a subsociety that is sufficiently sound economically for the subsystem to be able to fulfil its functions adequately. Sometimes attempts are made to calculate how large a population base is required for optimum management of various subject areas.⁷⁾

(2) the development of opportunities for voluntary co-operation between the subsystems of different subsocieties. Thus, several subsystems can co-operate in the management of especially high cost subject areas. Much the same effect is obtained as in the merger case, i.e. the resources of the various subsocieties are combined. The difference is that in the case of co-operation only a few specified subject areas are involved.

(3) the introduction of further levels between central and local level. Particularly high cost subject areas can be decentralized to the new subsociety, thus created, whereby outcomes corresponding to (2) are achieved.

The number of levels can vary in different subareas, depending on the population structure as a whole. More levels may be needed in, for instance, sparsely populated rural districts than in densely populated towns if equivalent service is to be provided for subsociety members in different areas.⁸⁾

As pointed out earlier (cf. 2.3) the freedom of the decision maker to vary the transfer variables is not unlimited. Different factors in the situation can render impossible the execution of certain measures or counteract certain desired outcomes. In decentralization, the local leaders are usually regarded as presenting a particular problem. If they find the present power structure satisfactory they can be expected to counteract any proposed changes to it. The subterritory is especially well suited to illustrating the importance of such factors. When the territory of a subsociety is created, the creation is often based on its environmental conditions, which are then used to justify opposition to the decision maker's wishes to change its area. Historical factors can weigh heavily. The mere fact that a certain subarea has had its own subsystem for a long period makes it difficult to initiate changes. Socioanthropological and cultural circumstances can act in a similar manner. It is difficult to combine ethnically and linguistically homogeneous subsocieties with subsocieties of another type. Often conditions of geography and communications

5) Leemans 1967, p. 21; cf. Decentralization for . . . 1962, p. 21.

6) Leemans 1967, pp. 9, 24.

7) Cf. Decentralization for . . . 1962, p. 16 ff., annex II.

8) Humes-Martin 1961, p. 12 f.; cf. Pusič 1969, p. 69.

have naturally confined a subsociety; it can be difficult to make territorial changes without changing these conditions. Finally, various demographical factors can limit the freedom of action of the decision maker to change the pattern of decentralization; for instance, population density. An often cited example of the importance of environmental conditions is the difference between country and town, which was for a long time considered to be so fundamental that it was thought that the two forms of subsocieties could not be combined.⁹⁾

To conclude, the decision maker can alter the subterritory variable by changing the area of the subterritory and so effect the structural conditions of the territory. Extensions can be made by mergers, co-operation, the introduction of another level, etc.

3.1.2 Subsystem

One of the more important differences between political subsystems and local implementers is that the former's allocation of values is performed by the subsociety members themselves, either directly or by a representative body of subsociety members appointed by them in some way (cf. 2.2). The participation aspect may therefore be regarded as a very important dimension in the subsystem variable and one that should be analysed more closely. A suitable basis for such an analysis is offered by the following quotation:

The lower the rank of the executive making given decisions, the greater the degree of decentralization. Conversely, the higher the rank at which the decisions are made, the greater the degree of centralization.¹⁰⁾

If this principle was applied to a hierarchy of subsystems, the degree of decentralization would increase the further we descended this hierarchy. The highest degree of decentralization is thus present when subsystems at the lowest level implement decisions. If we find ourselves in subsystems at the lowest level, is there then always the same degree of decentralization, independent of such things as the number of members in the system or of the possibilities of their exercising influence on the allocation of values? The answer must be negative, although it must be emphasized that such a standpoint is not altogether incontrovertible. Regard must obviously be paid to the individual's scope for influencing the implementation. Thus it should be understood, analogously with what applied to the subsystem hierarchy, that the greater the influence the subsociety members in general have on the subsystem's allocation of values, the higher the degree of decentralization in the society.¹¹⁾ This argument is valid so long as the other variables are kept constant.

9) Leemans 1967, p. 26 ff.; cf. Sharpe 1970, p. 158 ff.

10) The balance between . . . 1954, p. 28.

11) Cf. Lockard 1968, pp. 451.

The participation aspect is supposed to be the variable that decides the choice of the decision maker between centralization and decentralization or, as it is formulated in one of the hypotheses above (cf. 2.3.3):

In a society with a centralized allocation of values (concentrated or deconcentrated), actors who recommend decentralization can be expected to do so in order to achieve the fulfilment of values by "participation conditions".

Behind the thought that participation has special qualities lies a concept about the individual's motivation; that his work will be improved if he has the opportunity to influence his situation in a more obvious manner. Democratic theory contains lines of thought according to which democracy is understood not as an instrument but as a value in itself that accentuates interest in participation. Also in societies where decentralized allocation of values is well established the participation aspect is notable. What one primarily wishes to prevent is the following development:

How can he be prevented from considering himself a "victim" of an administrative machine, of an impersonal power dealing with complicated questions over which he has no control?¹²⁾

The alternative to this feeling of powerlessness is to give the individual influence, or as it is sometimes formulated, a feeling of influence over his situation. What possibilities has the decision maker to vary the degree of participation of subsociety members in the subsystem's allocation of values? Here are three dimensions of special interest to liberal-democratic systems:¹³⁾

(1) *direct — representative*. The subsystem's allocation of values can be made either by its members directly, or by a representative body appointed by them. A representative body appointed by an electoral assembly of some kind is also conceivable. Different types of local referendums are also a possibility.

(2) *types of voting rights*. In both the direct and the representative subsystems, the opportunities for subsociety members to exert formal influence can be organized in different ways. In both cases, there can be universal and equal suffrage or voting-rights restrictions according to some criterion and/or different weights on the votes.

(3) *delegates — officials*. The subsystem's allocation of values can be carried out in its entirety by the subsociety's elected representatives, the so-called delegates. As the subsystems of many societies have become vast and complicated, officials have been appointed. These are in the main entrusted with the tasks of preparing and executing the subsystem's decisions. The

12) Leemans 1967, p. 6; cf. Schnur 1969, p. 94.

13) Cf. Humes-Martin 1961, pp. 9 ff., 51 ff.

officials are not necessarily associated with the subsociety as the delegates must be. The combination of delegates and officials presents the usual expert — layman problems. The question is whether the popularly elected delegates, and through them the subsociety members, are able to enforce their views in opposition to the expert knowledge of the officials, or whether the officials, on the strength of their expert knowledge, are actually responsible for forming the allocation of values.

The number of subsociety levels can be examined from the points of view of both the subsociety (cf. 3.1.1) and the subsystem: in the latter case, there are two main forms. Subsystems can exist on different levels and independently of one another and can carry out the allocation of values in various subject areas; they can also stand in hierarchical relation to one another, implementing the allocation of values in the same subject area.¹⁴⁾ In the case of subsystems that are independent of one another, the degree of decentralization decreases when subject areas are transferred from subsystems at a lower level to subsystems at a higher level. In a hierarchical situation where subsystems at a higher level can be seen as control units in relation to subsystems at a lower level, the degree of decentralization can be changed by varying steering and review between different levels of subsystem. However, there is no need to study in more detail the extremely complicated constructions obtained in this way.

It is not necessary for every subsystem of a given society to be organized in the same way. This not only applies to subsystems at different levels, but can also apply to subsystems at the same level. Thus subsystems can be constructed in different ways for different types of subsocieties, for instance, country and town.¹⁵⁾ Otherwise, there is usually a common framework, including a decision-making organ and one or more executives. Within this framework, the organization can be varied for different subsystems.

The decision maker can thus modify the subsystem variable by formulating opportunities for participation by subsociety members, by creating subsystems at different levels and determining the relations between these subsystems, and by shaping in more or less detail the organization of authorities working within these subsystems. It might be of interest to discover to what extent these actions by the decision maker can lead to outcomes that indicate a spreading and equalization of influence amongst subsociety members.

3.1.3 Subject areas

There is no generally accepted basis for the classification of subject areas. This presentation will therefore consist of an analysis of possible methods of

¹⁴⁾ Cf. Stanyer 1967, p. 15 f.

¹⁵⁾ Cf. Meyer 1957, p. 246 f.; Humes-Martin 1961, p. 16 ff.

classification with special reference to what can be essential to decentralization. It will mostly be a development of the discussion on subject area in 2.1.1.

It might be possible to classify subject areas by output types. Almond and Powell identify distributing, extracting, regulating, and symbolic output types. Another way would be to distribute subject areas according to the fields of concern involved. This method is the principle one described in the literature. It is commonly used by different states to organize their administrative units, such as the Department of Defence, the Ministry for Social Affairs, and the Ministry of Education. Here, the difficulties are, if possible, even greater than in the former case. It is difficult to find a decisive basis for dividing up the different fields of concern. If applied studies are considered, it is found that different fields of concern overlap one another, or are subordinate or superior to one another, and so on. It might be possible to construct a two-dimensional system for the classification of subject areas on the basis of output type and field of concern.

In the model sketched here, the transfer variables offer the decision maker three main alternatives: concentration, deconcentration, and decentralization. On what basis does the decision maker distribute the subject areas between these three alternatives? It would be quite natural if the political system supervised those subject areas particularly concerned with the whole of society, and the subsystems allocated values in the subject areas that referred only to the subsociety. A survey of the empirical conditions in the various societies in this respect, however, offers little guidance:

In all systems the problem is to find the boundary at which general and central problems end and special or local problems begin. At best the boundary is blurred.¹⁶⁾

It might be possible to distinguish certain main lines of choice in the distribution of subject areas between central and local levels. Defense and foreign policies are exclusively central matters, whereas subject areas of the type "determine the street names in the towns" are so clearly locally bound that they are transferred to the local level; however, not necessarily to a political subsystem. Between these two poles, which can of course be extended somewhat, there are then a large number of subject areas that are transferred sometimes to one and sometimes to the other implementer.¹⁷⁾

Decentralization of subject areas is usually carried out according to two main courses that occur side by side in different combinations in different societies:¹⁸⁾

16) Duchacek 1970, p. 6; cf. Meyer 1970, p. 195; Sharpe 1970, p. 154 f.

17) Maddick 1963, p. 29 ff.; Adrian 1968, p. 460 f.; A Handbook of Public Administration 1961, p. 66 ff.

18) Cf. Maddick 1963; p. 107 ff.; Humes-Martin 1961, p. 35 ff.; Decentralization for ... 1962, p. 28 ff.; Meyer 1957, p. 243 ff.

- (1) the subsystem is allocated all subject areas that are not explicitly exempted because, for instance, they are attended to by some other implementer. The direct steering of these subject areas has a very low degree of precision and is often restricted to the condition that the allocation of values shall agree with the interests of the subsociety or similar.
- (2) the subsystem is allocated explicitly-defined subject areas wherein the direct steering can vary from the highly imprecise to the highly precise.

In the first case, we can speak of generally defined subject areas; in the second, about specially defined subject areas.

When subject areas are discussed in the literature it is usually done by fields of concern. The common procedure is that the fields of concern are simply enumerated under headings. As an example of such a list of subject areas, one of the more complete will be given here on broad lines. It is of particular interest because the author bases it on a very wide range of empirical material.¹⁹⁾

- (1) *communal service* is often in the generally defined subject area. It includes distinctly local matters that must of necessity be dealt with if the subsociety is to function. It covers such matters as the maintenance of streets and roads, the construction and maintenance of drains, refuse collection and disposal, the planning and making of cemeteries, the construction and maintenance of public buildings, etc.
- (2) "*protective service*" includes such items as police, fire-brigade, ambulance, fire and building regulations, certain aspects of "public health", etc. Subject areas in these fields of concern are often specially defined.
- (3) *social service*, or social welfare policy, as it is more commonly termed, was mainly confined to poor relief in earlier periods. The growth and expansion of the Welfare State has produced an ever increasing number of subject areas. Subject areas under this subject field are usually specially defined.
- (4) *trade regulation* includes the issuing of rules for local trade and industry, and their enforcement.
- (5) *education* mainly refers to the supervision of elementary teaching.

The literature usually refers to distribution into output types in one case, namely, extracting output. This covers the right to extract payments and services from the members of society. As a subject area, this right is of special interest because the financing of a subsystem's allocation of values poses special problems:

¹⁹⁾ Meyer 1957, p. 247 ff.; cf. Maddick 1963, p. 63 f.; Kaijser 1959, p. 22 f.; Decentralization for . . . 1962, p. 25 f.

The authority, or the competence, to undertake functions is generally useless unless the local units also have the financial power or means to undertake the task. For without money the local units can not pay for the men, the machinery, or the materials with which to carry out the local activities. The two most important criteria for determining the financial status of a local unit are its total income and the extent to which this income is dependent upon central government grants and contributions.²⁰⁾

Decentralization of extracting output is often interpreted as constituting local autonomy in general, or as one author expresses it, "Finance is the life blood of local government."²¹⁾ Usually, this output is decentralized in the form of the subject area "rights of taxation".²²⁾ The reason the rights of taxation have been judged so important for local autonomy is that they act as a counter-balance to the capacity of the system to financially steer its subsystems. If a subsystem lacks the ability to extract resources, it can become completely dependent on the financial-steering (cf. 1.3).²³⁾

The degree of decentralization must obviously depend on how large a part of the authoritatively regulated subject areas are decentralized. A quantitative measure of this type, however, is fairly non-committal. The degree of decentralization should also depend on the type of subject areas that are decentralized. From this aspect, there must be an immense difference between decentralizing defence policy and the right to regulate local trade. Some form of qualitative measure of different subject areas would, of course, be extremely valuable. This could possibly be done on the basis of the costs for different subject areas. Perhaps in this way, a standard could be constructed where the measuring technique could be expressed as "the more important, the bigger the costs." However, we cannot completely disregard the possibility that subject areas that fundamentally affect people's living conditions do not necessarily result in big costs.

When the decision maker uses the subject area variable, the quantity and quality of the subject areas can be varied. There is hardly any specified basis for classification of subject areas. A division according to fields of concern seems to be most common.

3.1.4 Direction

As a transfer variable, direction includes the two direct steering forms, rule-steering and order-steering, and all the indirect steering forms except for form-steering of organization and territory, which is restricted to special variables. Each steering form can be placed in a continuum between the

20) Humes-Martin 1961, p. 44.

21) Alderfer 1967, p. 122; cf. Decentralization for . . . 1962, p. 55 ff.; Humes-Martin 1961, p. 44 ff.; A Handbook of Public Administration 1961, p. 68; Schnur 1969, p. 97.

22) Decentralization for . . . 1962, p. 60.

23) Cf. Pusič 1969, p. 68.

poles of low precision and high precision. Financial- and information-steering can also be either specific or general (cf. Fig. 5). The model of the control process presumes that the implementer is directed by the steering subject, which consists of the decision maker and his possible steering units. Corresponding conditions refer to the relation between the authoritative decision maker (with possible steering units) and the political subsystem:

No unit of local government is, by definition, completely selfgoverning. If it were, it would no longer be a unit of local government but rather a sovereign city-state . . .²⁴⁾

At least theoretically, the decision maker is an absolute authority. In practice, however, this is not always the case. Moreover, other reasons for unreliability of the direction can be imagined (cf. 1.3).²⁵⁾

All the different steering forms can occur in the relation between political system and political subsystem. The direct steering can be very imprecise, for instance, in a generally defined area, or very precise, for instance, in the specially defined subject areas. Elsewhere, all positions between precise and imprecise are conceivable. In the dimension specific — general, the latter variant is the dominant one, in the form of rule-steering, which in view of the number of matters and the “distance” between authoritative decision maker and subsystems is quite natural. The decision maker, however, can reserve the right to order-steer and he usually does so.²⁶⁾

Of the indirect steering forms, financial-steering is of great importance because all allocation of values depends on economic resources. The financial-steering can however be balanced by the subsystem’s own resources, for instance, those extracted by taxation. To the extent that the subsystem can pay for its own allocation of values, the decision maker loses one of his most important steering possibilities. But when the subsystem has scanty resources, which is often the case, the financial-steering can be of decisive importance for the subsystem’s allocation of values. Because both system and subsystems usually have powers of taxation, there is a risk of goal conflicts. Attempts are made through rule-steering of the powers of taxation to eliminate this risk to the highest possible extent.²⁷⁾

The financial-steering can be in the form of general grants. The decision maker can use these grants in an endeavour to ensure that all subsocieties have sufficient income to be able to maintain a minimum standard. In this case the decision maker is engaged in steering by virtue of his making possible a certain allocation of values in the subsociety. However, financial-steering can also take the form of contributions for special purposes if it is presented in parallel with rule-steering. The decision maker can then steer the sub-

24) Humes-Martin 1961, p. 31.

25) Cf. *ibid.*

26) Cf. *ibid.*, p. 34 ff.

27) Cf. Decentralization for . . . 1962, p. 57.

system's allocation of values into new areas. A third form of financial-steering which lies, however, on the border of environmental steering (cf. 3.1.1) includes the mediation of the decision maker for loans to the subsystem.²⁸⁾ Thus the financial-steering does not merely result in outcomes which restrict the subsystem's freedom of action. Instead, it can make possible an allocation of values in subject areas which, for lack of resources, the subsystem must otherwise do without.²⁹⁾ The organization theorists who allot a decisive importance to the motivation of subsociety members do not even interpret this latter form of financial-steering as solely positive, however:

In many cases it is central government aid which is keeping the local units alive both directly with money and indirectly with the ideas and encouragement pushed along with the money. Nevertheless, it is usually only successful in preserving the form, not the spirit, of local representative government.³⁰⁾

Also recruitment-steering takes place, usually in the form of the decision maker appointing certain high officials in the subsystem. The information-steering can have great importance, particularly in those societies where the need for expert knowledge is great at the same time as the experts are few (and thus expensive) and the resources of the subsocieties insufficient. Subsystems that find themselves in this situation must largely rely on the system's expertise, supplied through the agency of the information-steering. All the earlier defined steering forms are used in the relation between the authoritative decision maker and the subsystem.³¹⁾

Direction is thus carried out by the decision maker with the aid of a number of possible steering units. In the liberal-democratic systems, direction is performed by the state (parliament and government) and their steering units. In the central administration organization, government units often act as steering units, for instance, the ministries in the ministerial administration systems. Often some ministry has been allotted the overall responsibility for the direction of the many political subsystems of society.³²⁾ The reliability of the direction must to some extent depend on the choice of steering units.

Direction plays a decisive role in determining the autonomy of a subsystem in relation to the decision maker. The more indirect, general and imprecise the direction is, the greater the subsystem's autonomy. The opposite refers to direct, specific and precise direction. The direct steering can be varied between one subject area and another. The indirect steering can influence various types of allocation of values in different ways. The real autonomy of the subsystem naturally depends on the reliability of the direction, which can sometimes be influenced by the choice of steering units.

28) Decentralization for . . . 1962, p. 62 ff.

29) Humes-Martin 1961, p. 45.

30) Ibid.

31) Cf. Decentralization for . . . 1962, p. 26 f.

32) Cf. Humes-Martin 1961, p. 32 ff.

When the decision maker alters the direction variable, he has access to three different dimensions of which two can be described as dichotomies, namely, direct — indirect and specific — general, and one as a continuum, namely, precise — imprecise.

3.1.5 Review

Review can refer to all four steering variables, i.e. subterritory, subsystem, subject areas, and direction. The subsystem can deviate from the steering in two main ways: (1) it attempts to follow the steering, but for some reason cannot; (2) it deviates consciously from the steering (cf. 1.3). In the steering relation involved here, the problem is accentuated by the possibility of a large “distance” between decision maker and subsystem. The choice of review units is an attempt to solve this distance problem. Often different types of regional and local level organizations that belong to the political system are chosen as review units for the subsystem so as to bring review subjects and review objects closer together.³³⁾

The objects of review can be either the reliability of the steering or the rationality of the decision or both. Sometimes there is a distinction which lies close to this division of review objects. It is pointed out that the review can cover both the legality and the suitability of measures taken by the subsystem.³⁴⁾ The review of legality covers obvious steering deviations and those instances where the subsystem attempts to perform allocation of values in non-decentralized subject areas. The suitability test refers to decisions which of course lie within the framework of the steering, but which has been found unsuitable for some reason — for instance because they do not result in desirable outcomes. The legality aspect is a reliability review, whereas the suitability aspect can be said to be a rationality review.

The subsystem's allocation of values can be reviewed both actively and passively. In an active review, the review units make inspection visits, demand reports, revise the accounts that record the use of grants, and so on. A common form of this review is the so-called submission, which means that the review unit has the subsystem's decisions submitted to it for approval before they are implemented. This review thus comes between administrative decisions and their execution.³⁵⁾ The passive review is carried out by the subsociety members, who through appeal to the review subject demand rectification of the subsystem's decision. The system thus cannot initiate the review. If the emphasis is laid on passive reviews instead of on active reviews, this results in greater autonomy for the subsystem. With re-steering, the decision maker has access to much the same variables as with steering. Re-steering primarily indicates that the faulty or unsuitable decision is with-

33) Cf. Humes-Martin 1961, p. 39 ff.; *The Balance between . . .* 1954, p. 65.

34) Cf. Humes-Martin 1961, p. 39 ff.

35) Cf. *Decentralization for . . .* 1962, p. 27; Humes-Martin 1961, p. 39 ff.

drawn. Thereafter, there are a number of different possibilities. A common variation with subsystems is that the subsystem itself can make a new decision with the guidance of information-steering for instance. However, it can also be imagined that the subsystem can be given a new decision through precise order-steering. The former variant, in relation to the latter, can be said to act towards higher subsystem autonomy. The review subject can vary the review variable regarding the nature and extent of the review. In the latter event, the review can be active or passive and a review of reliability or rationality or both. The effectiveness of the review can be expected to increase if the review unit lies “close” to the subsociety; therefore, the choice of review units is an important subvariable (the same applies to the choice of steering units too, of course).

3.1.6 The variation possibilities

The objective of the five subsections above (3.1.1—3.1.5) was to split the decentralization variables into subvariables. This division was given partly a theoretical form and partly the form of examples of subvariables taken from the literature. The main subvariables thus obtained can be summarized as follows:

the subterritory variable. The surface area of the subterritory can be varied with regard to the structure of the newly-created areas;

the subsystem variable. One can vary the degree of influence of subsociety members on the subsystem’s allocation of values;

the subject area variable. The number and importance of the subject areas can be varied;

the direction variable. The subsystem’s autonomy in relation to the decision maker can vary in the dimensions direct — indirect, specific — general, and precise — imprecise;

the review variable. The extent and form of the review (whether it covers the reliability of the steering or the rationality of the decision, or both, and whether it is active or passive) affects the degree of autonomy of the subsystem in relation to the decision maker.

The choice of steering and review units can affect the reliability of the steering and review. This applies to all five variables listed above.

3.2 Decentralization goals

Actors intend to achieve different goals by making a choice from the three

transfer alternatives. A few opinions will be mentioned to illustrate the different possibilities. According to some theorists, centralization is to be preferred for reasons of pure effectiveness. There is at present a trend in this direction, strengthened by the development of modern communication techniques. The opinion of others is that decentralization is to be preferred because it is better suited to produce and protect values such as democracy and freedom. A third idea is that one should look for an optimum point between centralization and decentralization, where one can obtain the advantages of both.¹⁾ In regard to decentralization, one often encounters standpoints with considerable emotional overtones. Decentralization is identified with democracy, and one should look back to a golden age when the local leaders ruled the small city, which is interpreted as the ideal unit, at a happy distance from inhuman, complicated, and ineffective bureaucracies of modern times.²⁾ de Toqueville describes what could be called the classical democratic concept of decentralization, whose basic objectives still characterize the decentralization debates of the liberal-democracies. Hoffmann formulates de Toqueville's standpoint as follows:

The creation of self-governing units will release the spontaneity of the citizens, for liberty is power to build and not merely a capacity to resist. It will also preserve the dignity of the individual who will remain the master of his fate, whereas mere participation in an excessively abstract and distant general will would mean abdication. It will preserve the dignity of government, whose power, based on a "free consensus of wills" will be legitimate and respected. Not only will it perform the political function of preventing the tyranny of the general will, but it will have the social task of stopping that alienation of human beings from one another, that destruction of personal links which modern society brings with it — the task of "bringing men back together".³⁾

Because the decentralization goals vary according to different situations, it has not been judged worthwhile to try to construct a theoretical scheme of goals with reference to their content. It is the outcomes and not the goals themselves that are of main interest here. None the less, it has been considered important to suggest what types of goals could be imagined for the two levels of conditions and values used in the analytical model. The intention is to try to use the literature on decentralization to illustrate goal levels of decentralization. It then seems that at least a few "typical" decentralization goals exist.⁴⁾ A further factor motivates this comparatively modest level of ambition. With the boundedly rational decision maker presumed by the decentralization model, the problems of rationality present a serious obstacle to attempts to construct more complete, theoretical goal hierarchies.

1) Cf. Kochen-Deutsch 1969, p. 736.

2) Cf. Fesler 1965, p. 538 ff.

3) Hoffmann 1959, p. 125 f.

4) Cf. Ylvisaker 1959, p. 28; Sharpe 1970, *passim*; Hoffman 1959, *passim*.

3.2.1 Conditions

One way of looking at things is to interpret the conditions as “operationalizations” of values.⁵⁾ The literature contains relatively elaborate attempts to construct goals-means-schemes for decentralization on this basis. Ylvisaker divides the goals into instrumental values (most closely corresponding to conditions) and basic values (corresponding to values) and relates the former to the latter. He divides instrumental values into two groups, “individual” and “governmental process”.⁶⁾

The information about conditions that one encounters in the literature is most often of an enumerative type. It is a matter of strongly empirically bound enumerations; therefore one must pay due regard to the way in which the situation influences the conditions. Such enumerations can be useful as illustrations of conditions at goal level. Duchacek, for instance, discusses the following four conditions:⁷⁾

- (1) the decision maker is liberated from local routine matters and thus has more scope for busying himself with the central problems.
- (2) greater total effectiveness is obtained because the members of the subsystem are more motivated and take initiatives, and so on.
- (3) the subsystems will function as assembly points for identification with the system.
- (4) the decision maker is informed about the subsociety's wishes and the subsystem is informed about those of the decision maker.

3.2.2 Values

The difficulties of classification are, if possible, even greater when values are involved. Different actors have different values, and the construction of a value catalogue, which is both complete and instrumental, might encounter enormous difficulties. Another problem discussed earlier on (cf. 2.3) is that the actors can be presumed to try to achieve their values by using all the available means. A value that can be achieved by decentralization can perhaps also be achieved by several other means.

The literature, despite everything, contains attempts to create value catalogues for decentralization. In order to illustrate the level of the values, a few such catalogues will be presented. Ylvisaker works with three values bound to a situation corresponding to a modern society: “liberty”, “equality”, and “welfare”,⁸⁾ whereas Sharpe prefers the value triad “liberty, participation, and efficiency”.⁹⁾ Leemans has a more extensive value catalogue, which, more-

5) Cf. Sjöblom 1968, p. 72.

6) Ylvisaker 1959, p. 32.

7) Duchacek 1970, p. 12 ff.; cf. MacMahon 1961, p. 16; Decentralization for . . . 1962, p. 32; Leemans 1967, p. 49 f.; The Balance between . . . 1954, pp. 64, 80.

8) Ylvisaker 1959, p. 30 ff.; cf. Maass 1959, p. 9 f.

9) Sharpe 1970, p. 156 ff.

over, contains a situation discussion. He even tries to illustrate graphically the importance of different values in different situations. Because his value enumeration is intended to cover a relatively wide field, there is reason to present it as a survey:¹⁰⁾

(1) *national unity*, which includes the decision maker's attempts to unite a society politically by decentralization. The measure of decentralization can, in itself, be regarded as paradoxical in relation to such an objective; however, by establishing subsystems, the decision maker can produce an alternative to the traditional allocators of values in the subsociety. Here, one expects elected subsystem authorities which feel greater loyalty to the system than the earlier authorities. Subsystems also facilitate the decision maker's efforts to introduce his policy into society.

(2) *democracy* as value is based on the fact that the subsystem authorities are elected by the subsociety members. The subsystem, with its relation to "the grass roots", could be seen as an ideal school of democracy and as a basis and necessary prerequisite for a democratic political system within society. The value has often come to be interpreted as being so central that the concepts decentralization and democracy tend to coalesce.¹¹⁾

(3) *freedom* can mean freedom for both the individual and subsociety. Sub-society autonomy, in relation to the political system, has been an important decentralization value.

(4) *efficiency of administration* has been emphasized mainly in situations where deconcentration has been the dominant theme. In decentralized societies, the goal of efficiency has been specially stressed during phases of expansion of the public sector.

(5) *social and economic development* has been actualized against the background of progress in the developing countries. This has renewed interest in the possibility of achieving value fulfilment through decentralization.¹²⁾

Leemans's goal categories oscillate between what can be called conditions at a high level and values. The first three types of goals fall well within the value category, whereas the goals of effectiveness and development should most probably be interpreted as conditions at a high level.

3.3 The degree of decentralization

The terms centralization and decentralization, with the significance given to them in this work, indicate either implementing organization to which the execution of the subsociety's allocation of values has been transferred, or else they indicate which implementer organization carries out the subsociety's

10) Leemans 1967, p. 13 ff.; cf. Hoffmann 1959, *passim*; Huntington 1959, *passim*.

11) Cf. Fesler 1965, p. 545 f.

12) Cf. Decentralization for . . . 1962, p. 6.

allocations of values. What is interesting in this context, however, is who is to put his stamp on the formulation of the society's authoritative allocation of values. What might be needed would be a terminology that gave a measure of this impress on the allocation of values.¹⁾ For lack of this, we speak of different degrees of centralization and decentralization. Because the degree of decentralization is of such great interest in this context, the problems concerning its components will be discussed below. First, however, the opinions in the literature on the matter will be related in broad outline, and the difficulties with the definition of decentralization used here will be touched upon.

3.3.1 Attempts at measurement in the literature

According to current concepts in the political science literature on decentralization, a decentralized allocation of values offers greater freedom of action to a subsystem than a deconcentrated allocation of values offers to the local implementer²⁾ (for the present, the freedom of action permitted by the decision maker will be discussed because it is an important component in the degree of decentralization). This concept has been formed by measuring (more or less impressionistically) the power that has been transferred from the decision maker to the implementer at the local level.³⁾

As soon as attempts are made to reason in power terms, however, we encounter all the problems that the handling of the power concept usually involves, which as yet are far from solved. In order to achieve an operational measure of power, therefore, it is usual to start from the functions that have been transferred. According to this, the implementation function is transferred by means of deconcentration, whereas both the decision-making and the implementation functions are transferred by means of decentralization. In the latter event, where the decision-making function, which is important for the freedom of action it confers, has also been transferred, the implementer is judged to have gained the greatest power.⁴⁾ This must thus indicate that such things as the precision of the steering (and other decisive variables) are implied in the terms deconcentration and decentralization. In deconcentration, for instance, the decision maker is "always in a position to direct the subordinate agencies which actually make the decisions, and to reverse these decisions"⁵⁾; this can be expected to reduce the implementer's freedom of action. It even happens that the term decentralization is allowed to describe the transfer of imprecisely directed subject areas, whereas deconcentration is

1) Cf. Fesler 1965, p. 536 f.

2) Cf. Meyer 1957, p. 56 ff.; Alderfer 1964, p. 176 f.; Alderfer 1967, p. 63; Humes-Martin 1961, pp. 8 f., 35 ff.; A Handbook of Public Administration 1961, p. 64; Fesler 1949, p. 127 ff.;

3) Cf. Fesler 1949, *passim*; Maass 1959, p. 9 f.; Ylvisaker 1959, p. 34; Baum 1961, *passim*.

4) Cf. note 2.

5) Meyer 1957, p. 57.

allowed to describe precisely directed subject areas. If the terms are allotted this meaning, a subsystem can take care of both decentralized and deconcentrated allocation of values.⁶⁾

It is not possible to draw any conclusions about the degree of decentralization solely on the basis of the structural definitions given to the various transfer alternatives in this work i.e. concentration — central implementer, deconcentration — local implementer, and decentralization — subsystem. To determine the degree of decentralization requires a detailed examination of the different means variables. The question is to what extent this has been done in the literature.

The central role played by steering and review in determining the degree of decentralization has naturally been often noted, as in the following somewhat drastic statement:

All work involves some decision-making power. For example, the street-cleaner has "authority" to sweep vertically or horizontally in a specified area. The crucial element appears to be in terms of the control of the behavior of others.⁷⁾

However, it is difficult to find any more elaborate discussion about the degree of decentralization in political and other systems. An enumeration by Kaufman, who gives a number of criteria on the degree of centralization and decentralization in an organization, is more complete. The extent to which the implementer is subjected to detailed directives is given as the most important of these criteria. A second criterion concerns the authority to appoint and to dismiss; namely, whether or not it is limited to the organization management. A third criterion is whether the implementer has his own resources at his disposal or whether he is dependent on the economic support of the management. A fourth discusses the form and scope of the review; a fifth, the extent to which the management "indoctrinates" loyalty in the implementation personnel.⁸⁾

All Kaufman's indicators of the degree of decentralization are easily translatable into the terminology of this dissertation. It is mainly a matter of the precision of different forms of direct and indirect steering. In some instances, we can speak of power-creating activities. It is interesting that the influence of the review on the degree of decentralization is also discussed. Kaufman's presentation indicates the main direction of the following discussion on the degree of decentralization. However, it is too bound up with the autonomy aspect, and other components of the degree of decentralization are completely omitted. To the latter belong, for instance, the quantitative and qualitative aspects of transferred subject areas.⁹⁾ None the less one factor can

6) Cf. Humes-Martin 1961, p. 35 f.; Fesler 1949, p. 62 f.

7) Baum 1961, pp. 26, 84; cf. *The balance between...* 1954, pp. 10 ff., 16, 18, 28; Simon 1957a, p. 234 ff.; Ramström 1966, p. 99; Etzioni 1966, p. 48; Whisler 1964, p. 314 ff.

8) Kaufman 1963, p. 12 f.

9) Cf. Boaden 1970, p. 175.

already be established: the choice of transfer alternatives is not the only matter that decides the implementer's autonomy in relation to the decision maker. We can well imagine central or local implementers who have greater freedom of action in relation to the decision maker than subsystems have.¹⁰⁾

3.3.2 Boundary problems

The structural definitions of the various transfer forms used in this presentation sometimes offer certain boundary problems in practical applications of these concepts. For instance, it is not always altogether obvious whether an implementation organization at the local level is to be classified as a subsystem or as a local implementer. The decision maker who appoints the officials of a local organization of the political system can also influence the composition of the subsystem authorities, for instance by appointing certain of its actors. The elected representatives of the subsociety can co-operate in the activities of such a local organization.¹¹⁾ Further illustrations of how complicated the constructions can be are offered by the following quotation:

For example, freely elected councils are sometimes at the mercy of the central government as to the actual holding of elections, for the central ministry decrees when elections are to be held. Furthermore, in many countries freely elected councillors may be removed by higher authority; in still others their decisions may be nullified by arbitrary decision at an upper level. Likewise, traditional officials may be ousted when they do not measure up to standards imposed from above. On the other hand, centrally appointed local officials (for example, traditional chiefs in Africa), because of the depth of their local roots and their knowledge of local conditions, are often the decision makers and the dominant segments of the local power structure. They can flaunt the dictates of central ministries, and often they do. Then again, there are many instances where provincial, district, and communal councils are made up partly of elected officials and partly of those who are either national officials operating in local areas or are appointed by central authorities. To which class does a local unit belong when its council is elected and its executive is appointed by the central government?¹²⁾

Difficulties of this kind, however, could be solved by creating classifications of the different principal forms of implementation organizations with the help of a more detailed analysis of the transfer variables.¹³⁾

3.3.3 The decentralization variables and the degree of decentralization

How shall the decision maker vary the decentralization variables in order to achieve a higher degree of decentralization in a society? The components

10) Cf. Meyer 1970, p. 29 ff.

11) Cf. Alderfer 1967, p. 53; Humes-Martin 1961, p. 5; Fesler 1949, p. 63 f.; Decentralization for ... 1962, p. 40.

12) Alderfer 1964, p. 177.

13) Cf. *ibid.*, p. 177 ff.

of the "degree of decentralization" will be deduced from a definition of the term and then related to the decentralization variables.

The degree of centralization and decentralization can then be defined as follows:

— the further down the political subsystems a society's authoritative allocation of values is impressed, the higher the degree of decentralization.

— the higher up the political system a society's authoritative allocation of values is impressed, the higher the degree of centralization.

A high degree of decentralization implies that the subsystem is largely autonomous in relation to the society's authoritative decision maker, i.e. the subsystem has great freedom of action when implementing its allocations of values (*autonomy*). It also implies that the subsystem's allocation of values covers a large number of important subject areas (*importance*) and that the subsociety members in general exercise a considerable influence over the subsystem's allocation of values (*influence*).¹⁴⁾

According to this way of viewing things, subsystem autonomy is thus only one of the components of the degree of decentralization. Besides this, we must consider the number and importance of the subject areas and also the influence of the subsociety members. Thus, a society with little subsystem autonomy and a few insignificant, decentralized subject areas, and where the members of the subsocieties rarely exerted much influence on the subsystem's allocation of values, would have a low degree of decentralization.

How can the decentralization variables influence the various components of the degree of decentralization? All five variables are of interest in this context. Fig. 9 indicates the relation between the values of the different variables and a high degree of decentralization.

Decentralization variables	The values of the variables	Degree of decentralization
Subterritory	the greater its own resources	the higher the degree of decentralization
Subsystem	the greater the influence held by the subsociety member in general	
Subject areas	the greater the share of the society's authoritative allocation of values and the more important the subject areas	
Direction	the more imprecise, general, and indirect	
Review	the less extensive and the more passive	

Fig. 9. The values of the variables and the degree of decentralization

14) Cf. Lockard 1968, p. 451.

The relations between the decentralization variables and the components of the degree of decentralization can quite easily be seen. The degree of "autonomy" can be influenced by direction and review, and by subterritory. The number and "importance" of the subject areas can be regulated through the subject area variable, and the "influence" can be determined by varying the subsystem variable. The variable "subterritory" can possibly also affect the opportunities of individuals to exert influence (cf. 3.1.1).

The difficulties appear as soon as we attempt to determine empirically the degree of decentralization in various societies. The first problem is to find a common measuring system for all five variables. How, for instance, do we measure a more precisely defined form of direction against an increase in the number of subject areas to be directed? How do we assess an increase in the resources of the subsociety in relation to a decrease in the influence of the subsociety members in general? A further problem is to create measures for the subvariables of the decentralization variables. What does an increase in the number of subject areas indicate in relation to the centralization of an important subject area? On the whole, it is problematical whether it would be feasible to try to measure the total direction — it can differ in different subject areas. When the degree of decentralization is to be determined, we must, of course, measure the number of subject areas in which the subsystem actually allocates values, the direction-review which actually influences the subsystem, and the influence that the subsociety member in general actually wields.

However, the task need not be altogether hopeless. It is, for example, vital that — with the aid of careful "operationalizations" — we should be able to go considerably further than the "intuitive application of rough clues" with which, at present, we try most often to determine the degree of decentralization.¹⁵⁾

15) Kaufman 1963, p. 12; cf. Blondel 1969, p. 283.

PART TWO
THE DECENTRALIZATION DEBATE

Chapter 4

General basis for the content analysis

The second part of this dissertation contains an application of the decentralization model to material consisting of texts from the debate about local government in Sweden. The textual analysis involves the use of so-called "non-frequency" content analysis. The relation of this research technique to some fundamental problems is discussed and certain categories of analysis and an accounting technique are also presented. In view of the two debates, analysed in Chapters 5 and 6, a survey is made of the use of the decentralization variables in Swedish politics. Some fundamental features in the situations of the two debates are then described. It is important to realize that the presentation of these points is intended as a general introduction to the analysis of the debates.

4.1 The decentralization variables 1862—1970

As an introduction to a description of the use of the decentralization variables during the past hundred years, brief reference is made to the factors that possibly explain at least important parts of the current development. Broadly speaking, we are concerned with the change from the static, agrarian and poor community of the 1850s to the dynamic, urbanized and industrialized welfare society of the 1960s.

The development of the economic structure can be seen largely in changes in the proportions of employees in the various social sectors. In the middle of the nineteenth century about 80 % of the Swedish population were employed in agriculture. Thereafter, the proportion slowly decreased and after the 1870s there was a reduction in absolute figures. This development has accelerated — by the end of the 1960s only 10 % of the country's population were farmers. From the middle of the 1930s, industry and crafts constituted the largest sector, a position that, from the middle of the 1960s, it shared with commerce, transport and services. These two largest sectors comprised about 90 % of the employed population in 1970.¹⁾

The change in the country's economic structure and a considerable increase

1) Cf. SOU 1961:9, p. 19 ff.; Kaijser 1959, p. 30 ff.; Statistisk Årsbok (Statistical year book) 1970, *passim*.



Fig. 10. Public expenditure as a percentage of the G.N.P. 1880—1969 (From Molin-Månsson-Strömberg 1971).

in population led to an enormous migration from the rural districts to the urbanized areas (places with more than 200 inhabitants). Employment opportunities were increasingly concentrated in the urbanized areas. This urbanization process extended over a considerable period and at first the rural districts only lost their population slowly. Not until early in the 1930s did the population in the urbanized areas exceed that of the rural districts. Thereafter, the change went more rapidly and at the end of the 1960s almost 80 % of the country's population were living in urbanized areas. The importance of the urbanization, however, lies beyond this purely quantitative information. Mainly the younger and more productive age groups moved into the urbanized areas, whereas the older people remained in the rural districts.²⁾

During this period of rather more than one hundred years, a poor agrarian country developed into a rich industrial country. Between 1850 and 1960 the per capita national income increased more than eightfold at the same time as the number of people in the country doubled.³⁾ Another figure of interest in this context is the changed distribution between public and private sectors. Whereas, at the beginning of the 1880s (when statistics were first kept), the public sector was responsible for less than 10 % of the G.N.P. on the expenditure side, its share approached 50 % by the end of the 1960s.⁴⁾

2) SOU 1961:9, p. 19 ff.; Statistisk Årsbok 1970, *passim*.

3) Cf. Kaijser 1959, p. 33.

4) Molin-Månsson-Strömberg 1971, p. 43.

The changes in the size of the public sector reflect a change in attitudes on the state's (and the communes') functions. The liberal-coloured economic policy, which began to have practical importance about the middle of the nineteenth century, was combined with what can almost be described as hostility to the state. In accordance with this policy, the functions of the state were reduced to a passive control. Against this, we can set the welfare state that developed from the 1920s and the 1930s and which expanded extremely rapidly during the period after World War II. The state, sometimes described as the "service state", would now create economic prosperity in the country and guarantee the citizens a high standard of living and social security.⁵⁾

4.1.1 The Swedish communal system up to 1862

As a forerunner of the communes, there was the self-government in joint affairs exercised from olden times by the inhabitants of the village (byn), the jurisdictional district (häradet), the county (landskapet), the parish (socknen), and the town (staden). During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries the central power of the state was strengthened. Local self-government is supposed to have been forced aside by the king's officials tightening their influence on an ever more increasingly narrowly regulated local administration. The importance of the jurisdictional district and the county as administrative units decreased and gradually almost ceased to exist. The only units to retain some degree of self-government were the parish and the town. The parish was supported in this by the church⁶⁾, and the towns were the only units that from olden times had a permanent organization for their self-government.⁷⁾ At the time of the introduction of the development that can be said to have led to the 1862 communal reform, the situation of local government can be described as follows:

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, our local self-government — to the extent that we can speak of such a thing in the rural districts — was administered by the parish meetings under the chairmanship of the rector, and in the towns, by the civic administration and burghers and by the town parishes. State and local community functions could be said to go hand in hand, especially in the civic duties of the towns.⁸⁾

When interest in broadening the local government led to a number of demands for decentralization at the beginning of the nineteenth century, it was mainly the need for a permanent organization that was stressed. A first step came with the 1817 decree concerning parish meetings (sockenstämor)

5) SOU 1964:27, p. 55 f.

6) SOU 1947:53, p. 15; SOU 1944:37, p. 7 ff.

7) SOU 1952:14, p. 134.

8) Kaijser 1965, p. 197; cf. SOU 1947:53, p. 15 f.

and vestry boards (kyrkoråd). The latter supervised church discipline and performed other similar duties, and from the end of the 1820s they also supervised the public health service. The vestry board owed no duties to the parish meeting.⁹⁾ Later commentators have considered that the 1817 reform hardly made any significant practical changes.¹⁰⁾

The next step in the development of local community organization came with a number of decrees in 1843. The old vestry board's nonclerical duties were taken over by the parish board (sockennämnden). The latter functioned as the executive organ for matters concerning public health and general order, and from 1847 it also dealt with poor relief. Teaching came under the jurisdiction of a special school board (skolstyrelse) in 1842. State control of local community activities was mainly performed by the county governor's office (länsstyrelsen) and was considerable.¹¹⁾ The 1843 reform scarcely differed from the 1817 reform in any fundamental respect.¹²⁾

During the 1840s and the 1850s, several initiatives were taken to establish local self-government of a more permanent type and of wider scope than its predecessor. In 1858 a committee was appointed. In 1859 the committee's report was submitted to the Riksdag. In 1862 decrees were issued concerning rural and urban district councils, there was a decree on parochial church meetings (kyrkostämman) and vestry and school boards, and there was a decree on county councils (landsting).¹³⁾ The modern Swedish local self-government can be traced back to the 1862 reforms.¹⁴⁾

4.1.2 Subterritory

The 1862 communal legislation included three main types of subsocieties. On the local level there were the rural commune (landskommunen), which, in almost all instances, corresponded to the old parish and the town, which covered the earlier area with the same name. This construction was in existence until the 1960s division reform, when the ambition was to give all communes at the local level the same structure. At the regional level there was the county council commune, which, as a rule, covered the same area as the county. Thus, there were two different subsociety levels: one local and one regional. In some cases, however, there was only one level. Towns that had a certain number of inhabitants (1862: 25,000) could be independent of the county council. The clerical duties were undertaken by the parish (församlingen).¹⁵⁾

As regards the number of levels, little has happened since 1862. The figure that determined a town's right to be independent of the county council has

9) SOU 1952:14, p. 123.

10) Johansson 1937, p. 57.

11) SOU 1944:37, p. 27; Swensson 1939, p. 182 ff.

12) Cf. Swensson 1939, p. 186.

13) Kaijser 1965, p. 210 ff.

14) Kaijser 1959, p. 11.

15) SOU 1945:38, p. 22; Kaijser 1962, pp. 2 ff., 53 ff.

gradually been adjusted; in 1970, only two towns were independent of the county council. An intermediate level was sometimes added through the introduction of various special communes.¹⁶⁾

Change of the subsociety's territory. Because only the territory of the local commune (primärkommunen) was subjected to changes on a greater scale, the present work is concentrated on development at local level. During the nineteenth century the subterritorial variable was used to incorporate regions from rural communes with towns and boroughs (köpingar) and to adjust certain borders. In 1919 a law was passed to regulate the increasingly common incorporations. The law did not question the existing subsociety construction as such, nor did it offer "means for a more radical transformation of the communal distribution".¹⁷⁾ During the period from 1930 to 1945, a great many incorporations were carried out.¹⁸⁾ However, it was not often a question of mergers of whole communes. This is clearly seen by the fact that the number of communes during this particularly active period was not reduced by more than about thirty.¹⁹⁾

During the first years of the 1940s, people began to question whether the existing communal distribution was, on the whole, tenable. The continuing migration resulted in an increasing number of communes with small populations. A large official investigation, The Distribution of Communes Committee, was appointed and in 1945 it submitted its main report. This proposed a minimum commune size of 3000 inhabitants. In connexion with the committee's proposal, the Riksdag passed a law which, from 1946 to 1951, permitted communal mergers without the earlier restrictions. When the so-called big commune reform (storkommunreformen) was carried through in 1952, the number of rural communes had been reduced from 2281 to 816. The mergers resulted in the average population in the rural communes increasing from about 1600 to 4100. As a consequence of this, the average tax basis of a commune more than doubled. The state had thus, for the first time, used the subterritory form as a means of decentralization in a radical way. The primary object of the reform was to create financially sound units in the small rural communes. About one quarter of all communes, however, did not attain the desired minimum size of 3000 inhabitants.²⁰⁾

The urbanization process continued. In 1960 one third of the communes had fewer than 3000 inhabitants. Ever increasing demands were made on the financial strength of the communes. The need for communal mergers was, therefore, again of immediate interest, as was indicated not least by the rapid expansion of intercommunal co-operation. The problems became an object of investigation, and in 1961, experts on divisions submitted their report.

16) Kaijser 1965, p. 211 ff.

17) Kaijser 1959, p. 89 ff.

18) Kaijser 1959, p. 92; SOU 1945:38, p. 11.

19) Wallin 1968, p. 12.

20) Kaijser 1959, p. 10 f.; SOU 1961:9, pp. 13 ff., 17 f.; Wallin 1968, p. 11 ff.

In the same year, a proposition based essentially on this investigation was presented to the Riksdag and passed in the spring of 1962. The decision meant a new distribution reform, the so-called communal block reform (*kommunblocksreformen*), which was intended to reduce the number of communes radically (the final number was to be about 280). In other respects too this was a more radical reform than that carried through in 1952. The new big communes would be created from economically and geographically connected areas around a centre of population (*centralort*). The old, and for long insurmountable, difference between rural district and town had thus been obliterated. The medieval parish system, retained from 1862 and not basically changed in 1952, was thereby finally abandoned.²¹⁾

Freedom of choice was stressed when the communal block reform was presented. The state would merely provide the communes with directives for the merger, thereafter those who so wished could decide for themselves. The voluntary execution of the reform, however, proceeded very slowly. The small rural communes, for which the communal block reform was primarily intended, were especially negative. The state, therefore, gradually changed its attitude to the free-will element and some adjustments were made to the original plans.²²⁾ In 1969, the Riksdag passed a resolution that the reform would be carried through by 1974 at the latest.

Co-operation between subsocieties. Before 1862, the parishes had been allowed to co-operate in solving certain problems. This possibility still existed for the communes after the 1862 reform. However, it was not utilized to any great extent. The 1919 law concerning local federations (*kommunalförbund*) offered the communes a construction that permitted co-operation of a more permanent character.²³⁾

Not until the 1940s did the communes begin to use, to any great extent, the right to form local federations. The need for co-operation, however, decreased immediately after the implementation of the big commune reform. But it was not long before the need for co-operation was again obvious. "At the beginning of the 1960s, there were at least 50 co-operation boards of more permanent character, 753 civil-law co-operation agreements involving 824 communes, and no less than 247 local federations with 671 participating communes."²⁴⁾

4.1.3 Subsystem

The division into various types of subsystems which was valid up to 1971 began with the 1862 reform. The subsystems were rural communes, boroughs, towns, county councils, and parishes. During the period, some subsystem

21) Wallin 1968, p. 18 ff.; Fröjd 1968, p. 2 ff.

22) Cf. Wallin 1968, p. 18 ff.

23) Kaijser 1959, pp. 86 f., 168 ff.

24) Svensson 1962, p. 396 f.; Wallin 1968, *passim*.

forms had been added but had disappeared. The development had led to greater equality between the two most important local communes (primärkommunerna), the rural commune and the town. From 1971, the same type of organization applied to all communes at local level.

The state's attempts to modify subsystems have chiefly involved three problems: franchise regulations, the decision organization, and the executive organization. The occurrence of subsystems at both local and regional level has offered the state alternatives in decentralizing subject areas. The regional and local subsocieties have never found themselves in any hierarchical relation to each other but have carried out allocation of values in various subject areas.

The franchise. The 1862 communal reform combined a discharged tax liability with the right to vote. All who paid a minimum tax including juridical persons such as companies had a vote specially graded according to the amount of tax they had paid.²⁵⁾ The members of the county councils were elected indirectly by the commune's meetings (kommunalstämmor) and town meetings (rådstugor) or, where they existed, by local councils (fullmäktige). County councils were not elected directly in general elections until 1910.²⁶⁾

The changes that were made concerning the right to vote were primarily a reduction of the voting scale. In the 1909 big franchise reform, the number of votes at municipal elections was limited to 40, corresponding to, at the most, 1/10 of the commune's entire votes. Universal and equal municipal franchise was introduced when political suffrage was carried through in 1918. This franchise deprived the companies of their right to vote.²⁷⁾ Later changes dealt with marginal matters; for example, reduction in the voting age and the removal of some restrictions in voting rights.

The decision organization. In 1862, the right of decision was given to the commune's meeting in the rural districts and to the town meeting; therefore, those entitled to vote made communal decisions directly. A representative assembly or council was obligatory in towns with more than 3000 inhabitants, whereas other communes could voluntarily introduce a council.²⁸⁾

The significance of the continued development was mainly that the representative principle was extended. In 1918, local councils became obligatory in all communes (including rural communes) with more than 1500 inhabitants. Local councils became obligatory in all local communes in 1955.²⁹⁾ Thus the development from a direct to a representative construction was completed.

25) Kaijser 1959, p. 27; Kaijser 1965, p. 201.

26) Kaijser 1965, pp. 203, 215.

27) SOU 1944:37, p. 59.

28) Kaijser 1965, p. 203.

29) Kaijser 1965, p. 229 f.; SOU 1952:14, p. 72 f.

The executive (and preparatory) organization. In 1862, the executive duty was entrusted to the civic administration (magistraten) and to the finance department (drätselkammaren) in the town and to the communal board (kommunalnämnden) in the rural district. The parish, which was responsible for the activities in important subject areas, had a school board and a vestry board. The county council was presumed to employ staff or transfer the executive duty to the county governor's office.³⁰⁾ It was otherwise presumed that the execution of the communal decisions would be dealt with by laymen:

The idea that the communes would to a large extent need to employ staff was foreign to the 1862 communal law-maker. That the town administrations had their own personnel for mixed, state, and local duties was regarded as essential on account of the town administration's duties. In the local government system, the layman element was thought to dominate the communal activities, not only at decision level, but also where administrative and executive duties were concerned.³¹⁾

During the nineteenth century, meetings and councils sometimes made decisions without preparation beforehand. When things became more complicated, this procedure was no longer possible. From 1918, compulsory preparation in committee or management, of the matters to be decided at meetings or councils, was essential.³²⁾

Several organizations for the execution and preparation have originated in parallel with the communal activity expansion as can be seen for instance, from the figures concerning the increase in expenditure (cf. 4.1.4). They have mostly developed in one of two different ways: first, a new organization has sometimes been prescribed for the especially indicated subject areas. For instance, the 1918 Public Assistance Law prescribes a public assistance board, and the 1919 National Health Service Act prescribes a public health board. Second, the expansion in a subject area has resulted in the introduction of a new organization. Concerning the generally indicated subject area in the local commune, sports matters, for instance, have sometimes been entrusted to a special sports board and cultural matters to a special cultural board.³³⁾

Not only has the number of organs increased, but there has also been a change in their nature. To an increasingly large extent, the communal representative administration has been provided with special personnel:

During the 1950s and 1960s, it has become increasingly rare for a commune to lack employees. Even small communes often have a municipal clerk, a social welfare officer and their assistants. The bigger communes have large offices with various grades of personnel and a large number of workers for streets and roads, refuse collection and disposal, electric plant and other essential services.³⁴⁾

30) Kaijser 1965, p. 203 ff.

31) Kaijser 1965, p. 232.

32) SOU 1952:14, p. 124 f.

33) SOU 1952:14, p. 125; Johansson 1968, p. 62; Kaijser 1965, p. 231.

34) Johansson 1968, p. 63; cf. SOU 1965:54, p. 38; Kaijser 1965, p. 231 f.

This development has not been steered by the state, but has taken place essentially within the framework of communal legislation. The use of communal employees has been interpreted as a departure from the principle of a representative administration. It is particularly interesting if, as has sometimes been pointed out, the emphasis in communal activities has shifted from the representatives to the boards and committees.³⁵⁾ The steering problems of special current interest in the commune, namely those between the representatives and the employees, have sometimes been solved by employing full-time representatives. The latter, who are called county councillors (landsringsråd) or commissioners (kommunalråd), have been introduced into more and more communes during the 1960s.³⁶⁾

In the communal legislation of the postwar period, there has been a continuous levelling of differences between the two main types of local commune. Since 1971 the same organization regulations have applied to all local communes.³⁷⁾

4.1.4 Subject areas

There are seldom explicit statements of the principles governing the transfer of subject areas from the state to the communes. The decisions have been made after general “practical, administrative, and economic deliberations”.¹⁾ When one looks at communal activities it is surprising to see how much they have expanded. This expansion has paralleled that of the public sector in general. This can be illustrated with numerical data: during the period 1874—1880, the total expenses of the local communes averaged 46-million kronor annually; in 1962, the corresponding figure was 11,094-million kronor. Even if depreciation of money is taken into account, these figures present a good picture of the development.²⁾

We often speak of two main types of subject areas in the decentralized Swedish administration. The first is the so-called unregulated administration, the generally indicated subject areas; the second is the specially regulated administration, which includes specially indicated subject areas.

Generally indicated subject areas. The function of the local communes was — according to the 1862 enactments — to “take care of their joint regulation- and economic-administrative affairs”.³⁾ The limit for this very extensive subject area gradually came under case law through decisions of the appeal authorities. Not until 1948 was the paragraph that contained this so-called general competence of the communes reformulated. The communes were then said to have as their function the care of the allocation of values, which

35) Kaijser 1965, p. 223.

36) SOU 1965:54, p. 38.

37) Molin-Månsson-Strömberg 1971, p. 63.

1) SOU 1965:54, p. 40.

2) Johansson 1968, p. 40.

3) SOU 1947:35, p. 17 ff.

referred to a general and a commune-bound interest.⁴⁾ At the same time as the public sector has extended the scope of its activities, the communes, with the support of their general competence, have become engaged in new subject areas.

Within the so-called free or unregulated sector the communes nowadays provide an increasingly differentiated material and cultural service. Communal gas and electricity works, tramway and bus companies, parks and sports grounds, youth centres and other assembly halls, libraries, and theatres are some randomly chosen examples of service areas that the communes have been able to utilize with the general authorization of the Local Government Act...⁵⁾

In a corresponding way, similar to the local communes, the county council was given a very wide general competence. It would take care of "joint affairs of the county, which refer to the general economy, the development of agriculture and other industries, provisions for improving the communications system, health services, teaching, public order and security, etc.", if those functions were not already administered by a central authority.⁶⁾ In principle, this paragraph describes powers similar to those in the present County Council Act.

On the basis of their generally indicated subject areas, local and county council communes could well be engaged in the same subject areas. However, the county council has, to an increasing extent, become specialized on health service duties, which in 1965 occupied almost 85 % of the county council's functions.⁷⁾

Specially indicated subject areas. When the 1862 enactments came into force, the underlying idea was that the main part of the communal activities could be operated with a generally indicated competence as the only legal basis.⁸⁾ From the beginning, however, there were two important subject areas, apart from those generally indicated; namely, poor relief and the school system (for which the parish was responsible). New subject areas, regulated according to special statutes, came gradually into existence. But it is true to say that in the nineteenth century, "especially in the rural districts, the communal activities, apart from schools and poor relief, were fairly minor".⁹⁾

The communal expansion was introduced at the time of World War I and continued over the crisis-combatting measures and social reforms of the 1930s. However, during World War II, the communes were largely required for measures directly concerned with the feeding of the people.¹⁰⁾ The period since World War II has been one of real expansion, during which specially

4) Kaijser 1959, p. 39.

5) SOU 1965:54, p. 39 f.

6) SOU 1944:37, p. 57.

7) SOU 1968:47, p. 110 ff.

8) SOU 1947:53, p. 23.

9) Kaijser 1959, p. 41.

10) Kaijser 1965, p. 220.

regulated subject areas have characterized the development.¹¹⁾ To some extent, decentralized subject areas have become centralized:

Thus the state sector has accepted responsibility for the employment exchange, the general road system, and, during the 1960s, also the police-, the legal-, the executive and the prosecution system. Nowadays, the educational system, housing, social welfare, and local communications are the local communes' most important administrative areas. The health service has for a long time dominated the functions of the county councils.¹²⁾

The communes' right to levy taxes could also be reckoned among the specially indicated subject areas. This right was established in the 1862 communal reform. The incomes from taxes have since 1874 averaged around 50 % of the communes' total income.¹³⁾

When the county council was first established, it was motivated by, among other things, the fact that it would form the foundation for a reformed Riksdag. In 1866, the Estate Riksdag was replaced by a bicameral Riksdag, one house being elected directly by general election and the other by the county councils and the city councils in towns that were independent of county councils.¹⁴⁾ This construction remained up until the 1970 election, from which time onwards the new Riksdag's single house has been directly elected by general election.

4.1.5 Direction

The direct steering can fittingly be discussed on the basis of the two main types of subject areas. The generally indicated sector is imprecisely steered, whereas the steering in the specially indicated subject areas can change from imprecise to precise. Education, to take one example of a subject area of basic importance for the communal activities, is very precisely steered.¹⁾ It is extremely difficult to judge the total rule steering. Possibly, we can suppose that it will become increasingly precise the more the communal activities include specially indicated subject areas.²⁾ In principle, order steering must not take place.

There is reason to discuss indirect steering in rather more detail. To begin with financial-steering, the intention was from the first that the communes, with the aid of their powers of taxation, would find it possible to pay the costs of their own activities themselves. However, it soon became obvious that financial-steering was necessary:

Whereas poor relief, in all essentials, was paid by the communes themselves, the state, from the middle of the century, contributed amounts — that grew as time

11) SOU 1965:54, p. 40; cf. Kaijser 1959, p. 46.

12) SOU 1968:47, p. 100.

13) Kaijser 1965, p. 209 ff.

14) Kaijser 1965, p. 206 ff.

1) SOU 1968:47, p. 131 f.

2) Cf. Kaijser 1959, p. 46; Kaijser 1965, p. 223 f.

went on — to the primary school system in the rural districts. It also contributed a little to the rural communal police system. Around the turn of the century, it was obvious that many small rural communes could not cope with the growing costs of schools and poor relief with their own resources; thus the long succession of more or less (usually less) successful communal taxation-, cost distribution-, and tax equalization committees.³⁾

The financial-steering that has taken place during the period up to the 1960s has mainly taken three different forms. Firstly, the state has at times been responsible for the costs in certain specially indicated subject areas; secondly, the state has equalized the taxation pressure between the communes by contributing to those with a weak tax base; thirdly, the state has tried to encourage the communes to increase their voluntary commitments by making contributions for special purposes.⁴⁾ Gradually, as the communes have become integrated into the public administration, the state has increasingly felt the need to fit them into the general financial-political framework of society.⁵⁾ Up to World War I, state financial-steering accounted for about 10 % of communal incomes. This has since risen; at the beginning of the 1960s, it amounted to about 20 %.⁶⁾ Financial-steering has been of great importance since the beginning of the twentieth century, particularly for the small communes.

The increased rule-steering has resulted in an increase in information-steering. "Besides general statutes, the reforms have produced a continuously growing flood of regulations, advice and instructions, and an increased need for labour and economic, technical, and administrative organization experts."⁷⁾

Whereas the steering forms that have been discussed so far have probably led to increased state steering of the communes, the opposite is true of recruitment-steering. During the nineteenth century some members were chosen to serve on councils and committees by virtue of their standing in the community. During the second decade of the twentieth century, this system was dropped in the councils, although it was still retained in certain committees even as late as the 1950s and 1960s. The civic administration in the towns was of particular interest because, for the most part, it could be regarded as a state steering unit. Not until the 1950s was it deprived of its communal functions.⁸⁾

4.1.6 Review

The political system had good opportunities for review because of the special constructions of the various subsystems. During the greater part of the

3) Kaijser 1965, p. 213.

4) SOU 1965:54, p. 387 ff.

5) SOU 1968:47, p. 137 ff.

6) Kaijser 1965, p. 210.

7) Kaijser 1965, p. 222.

8) Kaijser 1965, p. 226 ff.; SOU 1944:37, p. 59 f.

nineteenth century, when the county governor was usually appointed chairman of the county council, the state review (similar to the steering) of the county council activities can be said to have been very extensive. The towns housed the civic administration which, apart from other duties, had to act as a general supervision and control authority over the commune.¹⁾

From the first, there have been two types of reviews: appeal and submission. There are various types of appeal, dependent on whether they refer to decisions in regulated or unregulated sectors. In the latter, the members of the commune can lodge appeals against the legality of the decisions. The state review unit, which is the county governor's office in the court of first instance, can nullify illegal decisions. In the regulated sector, appeals can also be lodged against the suitability of the decisions. Here, the review units can both nullify communal decisions which are illegal or unsuitable and make new decisions. Because the communal expansion has to such a large extent taken place in the regulated administration where the possibilities of appeal are most extensive, the development has brought about a sharpening of the review process.²⁾

Submission means that the communal decision must, before being executed, be submitted to state authority for approval. Obligatory submission for the whole of their sphere of activities was applied to county councils for a long time. In the specially regulated administration, submissions often occur. It is by no means unusual for state authorities to have a right of inspection and so on.³⁾

Two of the specifically Swedish constructions with review connexions, namely the ombudsman of the Riksdag (justitieombudsmannen) and the Public Principle of Acts (offentlighetsprincipen för handlingar), have been extended to apply also to the communal administration as well as to the state administration during the twentieth century. Thus the Principle of Publicity, which gives the citizen the right to examine documents kept by the authorities (with certain exceptions as prescribed by law), also includes the communes since 1937. The Riksdag's ombudsmen have since 1957 had a supervisory right over the communal board members and officials. However, it is specially emphasized that the ombudsmen have to take into account the particular conditions under which the local self-government functions.⁴⁾

4.2 The public administration in the 1850s and 1960s

The two debate sections were chosen to represent two of what are perhaps the most important occasions in Swedish communal history. During the debates of the 1850s the foundation was laid for a communal organization

1) Kaijser 1965, p. 226 ff.

2) Cf. Kaijser 1959, p. 47; Molin-Månsson-Strömberg 1971, p. 150 f.

3) Molin-Månsson-Strömberg 1971, p. 150 f.; Kaijser 1959, p. 47.

4) Kaijser 1959, p. 49.

which did not change fundamentally until the 1960s. A decisive element in this change was the territorial reorganization, based on the 1962 Riksdag resolution about the communal block reform. The two debates can in many respects be regarded as the introduction to and the end of an epoch in the history of Swedish local government. On these two occasions, an extensive debate took place, which discussed in detail the prerequisites for local government. An analysis of these two debates should therefore provide a particularly searching test of the decentralization model in the sense that many variables are discussed.

Some features of the social changes that occurred during the period from 1850 to 1970 have been sketched in the foregoing. This should now be read in conjunction with a similarly sweeping sketch of the political development during the same period. If we describe on broad lines the political situations of the 1850s and the 1960s, we obtain the following picture. The Sweden of the 1850s was an Estate society about to enter into a period of disintegration. The franchise was strongly restricted. The Estate Riksdag, moreover, was counterbalanced by a Royal Power which took only a limited account of the Riksdag. In the 1960s, a democratic parliamentary system existed. A well-developed network of various pressure groups and nation-wide political parties offered the citizens many possibilities for exerting their influence.

As a background to the debate sections, the administrative organization at the two points of time will also be indicated in rough outline. The basic construction of the relation between state authority and administration was the same. The administration was directly subordinate to the governmental power, in relation to which its departments could be regarded as staff organs. The 1850 administration can be described as considerably centralized with the emphasis on concentration.¹⁾ In the 1960s, there was a certain balance between centralized and decentralized administration; at least, to judge from the two sectors' relative shares of the total public expenditure.

The central administrative level is perhaps of little interest if the intention is to point out the differences between the 1850s and the 1960s. The most important unit of organization was — and is — the central administrative board (*centralt ämbetsverk*). With the expansion of the public sector, the administrative boards have increased in number and have become larger.²⁾

There are more and greater reasons to stop at the development of the regional administrative level because the changes there are considerably more obvious. The regional administration of the 1850s had the county governor's office as its predominant authority.³⁾ A number of regional administration organs, with lay representation taken from the county, had originated during the first part of the nineteenth century.⁴⁾ However, they could

1) Cf. Kaijser 1959, p. 33.

2) Cf. Herlitz 1957, pp. 211 ff., 321 ff.

3) Sörndal 1937, p. 285 f.

4) Nilsson 1967, p. 2 ff.

hardly have caused any noticeable reduction in the power of the county governor's office. The county agricultural societies (*hushållningssällskapen*) were probably of greater importance. After 1840, their material sphere of competence was considerably enlarged at the same time as they were at least formally liberated from the influence of the county governor's office.⁵⁾ Because the county governor was usually elected chairman of the societies, the county governor's office in practice had influence over their functions. The societies could, therefore, be regarded as self-governing organs for the county's more interested (and prominent) farmers.⁶⁾

In the 1960s, the regional administration's scope and composition changed completely. Apart from the county governor's office, there was quite a large number of important administrative organs, of which the so-called county boards (regional organization of central administrative boards) deserve particular mention. Perhaps the greatest difference is the county council, which is a commune on regional level.⁷⁾

On the local administration level, a number of officials, such as bailiffs and district registrars, were — in the 1850s — subordinate to the county governor's office or, at least, strongly dependent on it. The parish organization also had a communal system; this, however, was relatively undeveloped. In the 1960s, there was an extensive central local organization, and in the local communes, a communal organization of great importance.

4.3 The content analysis

The instruments of the decentralization model are applied to material that consists of texts from the debate about local self-government in Sweden during two periods: the 1850s and the 1960s. The material is suitable because, among other things, it did not contribute with empirical impulses when the model was constructed. The presentation is intended merely to test whether empirical actors argue in a way that is easily translatable in the model.

The result of this content analysis can also possibly function as the basis for the next stage in building a decentralization theory namely to arrange the outcomes of the decentralization in a systematic manner. Through their goal indications, the texts can be thought to give a first idea of what effects can be achieved by decentralization.¹⁾ In this work, however, no such systematics are undertaken.

An account of the debates about local government can also have a value

5) *ibid.*, p. 9 f.

6) Cf. Sörndal 1937, p. 313 f.

7) Cf. any standard work on Swedish administration, for instance, Molin-Månsson-Strömberg 1971, *passim*, Brändström-Grimlund-Ricknell 1970, *passim*.

1) Cf. Vedung 1971, p. 36.

per se because the question must be judged to be of great political importance. Finally, it is also conceivable that the account of the material is suitable for testing various hypotheses concerning political ideas. Both debates imply that the same model is tested with the same procedure on the same type of material which, however, emanates from two completely different situations.

4.3.1 Reality-, information-, and text planes

The decentralization model is a systematic preparatory work for a decentralization theory, which must be able to answer the question:

What variables are involved in the means of decentralization, and what goals can the decision maker achieve with the use of these variables?

To begin with, it can be established that the texts contain proposals for a decentralization formulation with the decision-maker's perspective as that of the model. From this aspect, the selected material is well suited to answer the basic set of questions. But it is necessary to relate the texts to the reasoning about the decentralization model in the first part of the dissertation. The first question here must be: what does a text of the kind referred to here express?²⁾

The texts simply contain the political actor's proposal for an authoritative decision. This proposal must have originated through the actor's decision process, i.e. with his decision rule he changes his decision basis into a decision. He then uses his propaganda strategy to present this decision in the text.³⁾ If we are to say anything about the actor's basis of decisions, we must know his decision rule and his propaganda strategy, and this calls for material from outside the text.⁴⁾ The analysis can therefore be made on two different planes: *the information plane* (which contains the decision basis) and *the text plane*. Between these two planes, there is the decision mechanism, which consists of decision rule and propaganda strategy.

The next question must be: what does the information plane express? In general, it can be said that it consists of the actor's perception of what is here provisionally called the *reality plane* or of information from other actors. There is no reason even to try to penetrate the extremely complicated problems that concern "the reality". Broadly speaking, it "refers to the state of affairs as they actually were rather than to the estimates of this condition", which the actor has formed.⁵⁾ With the model of bounded rationality postulated here, we can presume that there are deviations between the reality- and

2) Cf. George 1959 A, p. 53, and Ch. 4 and 5.

3) Cf. George 1959 A, p. 40 ff.

4) Cf. Budd 1967, p. 4; George 1959 B, p. 26.

5) George 1959 A, p. 15.

information planes. He who on the basis of the information plane can say something about the reality plane must have knowledge of the information creating perception mechanisms.⁶⁾

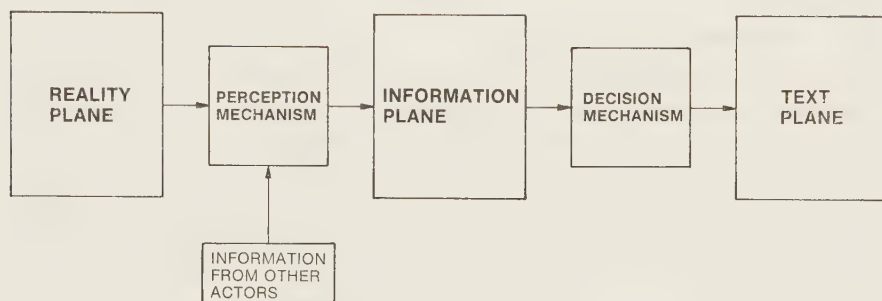


Fig. 11. The three planes of analysis

The last two chapters in this dissertation consist of what is usually called in the literature a “manifest content analysis”.⁷⁾ The conclusions to be drawn from such an analysis are primarily restricted to the text plane. With the ambition level to test the instrumentality of the decentralization model on an argumentation, the text plane should be sufficient. The same can also apply if we have access to the goal statements of the texts for creating a first concept of the effects caused by the decentralization variables.

However, it is perfectly obvious that it would be better for the latter task if we had access to the information plane or, preferably, the reality plane. If, from the text, we wish to get down to the information plane, we must know how the decision mechanism functioned when the text was formulated. Aided by other texts and a technique for criticising sources we can perhaps obtain such knowledge. The work we must put into the study of each text, however, is very large. It means that we will only have time to investigate a few texts. A “manifest content analysis”, on the other hand, permits the examination of a great deal of material. The possibilities of then getting from the text plane to the information plane must, in the main, be judged to be small.

If we formulate general suppositions about the relation between the text plane and the information plane, we can reason our way to probabilities of agreements between the two planes in certain instances. First, the scope of the entire debate can play a role. In a big differentiated debate with many different opinion groups, the probability of the actor revealing his information plane increases. Secondly, the actor’s will and ability to “manipulate” (for instance for tactical purposes) the text components in relation to his infor-

6) Cf. Litterer 1965, Ch. 3; George 1967, p. 12 ff.

7) Cf. George 1959 B, p. 26 f.

mation must be reasonably important. When the will and the ability are in this respect small, the probability that the actor reveals his information plane in the text increases.⁸⁾

4.3.2 Analysis categories

When choosing categories of analysis, it is crucial “that they must adequately reflect the investigator’s research question”.⁹⁾ The choice of analysis categories is here very simple. The components of the decision basis, the five information precedents, offer a natural starting point (cf. 1.2). They should reasonably have correspondences in reality- and at the text plane. The analysis categories are thus: *means*, *goals*, *prognosis*, *situation*, and *situation prognosis*.

	Reality plane	Information plane	Text plane
goals	<i>the goals the actor has</i>	<i>the goals the actor believes he has</i>	<i>the goals the actor says he has</i>
means	<i>the means that are available</i>	<i>the means that the actor believes are available</i>	<i>the means that the actor says are available</i>
prognosis	<i>the effect that a means will cause</i>	<i>the effects that the actor believes a means will cause</i>	<i>the effects that the actor says a means will cause</i>
situation	<i>the situation as it is</i>	<i>the situation as the actor interprets it</i>	<i>the situation as the actor says it is</i>
situation prognosis	<i>how the situation will develop</i>	<i>how the actor believes the situation will develop</i>	<i>what the actor says on how the situation will develop</i>

Fig. 12. The analysis categories with their equivalents at the other planes of analysis

Of the five analysis categories, prognosis will not be specifically discussed. Instead, the prognoses will be used to establish means and goals, which are usually presented in prognosis themes, for instance, “if the communes are enlarged, more effective administration is obtained”. If this prognosis is made in a pro-argumentation, the means is presumed to be “larger communes” and the goal “a more effective administration”. Prognosis can also be found in the contra-argumentation, where the desire is to show the unwanted effects the use of other actors’ recommended means would have. Of the four remain-

8) Cf. George 1959 B, p. 18 ff.

9) Holsti 1969, p. 95.

ing categories of analysis, the means, in accordance with the decentralization model, will be differentiated on the five decentralization variables (subterritory, subsystem, subject areas, direction, and review) and the goals on the two goal levels (conditions and values).

There is reason to confront the chosen analysis categories with the two presumptions about the relation between text plane and other planes. For this purpose, two schemes of textual analysis taken from the literature are presented as comparison. They are works published at the same time: Robert A. Levine, *The Arms Debate* (1963) and Hans F. Petersson, *Power and International Order* (1964). Because they are very different, they can be suitable as illustrative material.

Levine has three different types of statement as his categories of analysis: "*recommendations* as to what should be done; *value judgements* as to what desirable effect we are trying to obtain by doing it; and *analyses* concerning what the effect of doing it will in fact be".¹⁰⁾ The first two categories thus correspond to what, in the foregoing, were called means and goals. The third category is so wide in Levine's application that, besides prognosis, it also includes situation and situation prognosis. The recommendations are split into two main types: "Marginal recommendations are for small incremental changes in existing processes and mechanisms, while systematic ones are for large variations affecting entire systems."¹¹⁾

Petersson works with a considerably more complicated scheme. Power is separated into three aspects: the material bases, the non-material bases, and the mobile aspect. The material bases of power consist of the physical capacity to undertake significant acts in international politics — *capability*. The non-material bases of power are related to the propensity of the actors to act in certain ways in international politics — *motivation*. The exercise of power by deliberate courses of action designed to affect the behaviour of others — *policies*. These three aspects are considered on three levels. The deepest level contains the fundamental view of political reality held by a given school of thought — *stereotype*. The level of *strategy* converts the general descriptive and premise-based elements of the stereotype into an action-oriented but still generalized prescription. The application of strategy is the third level and is termed the *implementation*.¹²⁾

These two schemes will now be confronted with the supposition about the actor's will and ability to manipulate the components of the text. We can here presume that there is little likelihood of the actor manipulating the text sections included in Petersson's analysis categories, particularly those at the "deep level". The actor might hardly even be conscious of the occurrence of the phenomena involved and have no immediate motivation to manipulate

10) Levine 1963, p. 3.

11) Levine 1963, *passim*.

12) Petersson 1964, p. 24 ff.

them. Levine's analysis categories, on the other hand, contain phenomena that are, so to speak, found at the policy level. The actors must be reasonably aware of these phenomena and have a great motivation to manipulate them. The conclusion of this reasoning must be that Petersson's analysis categories produce the best picture of the other planes. In this respect, this dissertation is very close to Levine. In other words, it is highly probable that the various planes diverge.

Where size and origin are concerned, Petersson's material (taken from a number of countries over a period of four years) is such that the probability of agreements between the planes is great. Levine has used a less extensive material than Petersson; none the less, it is such that a consistent distortion between information and text must be considered less likely. The textual material analysed in this work might correspond to that of Levine on this point too.

The above reasoning will simply illustrate that different sets of analysis categories can present different probabilities which, on the basis of the texts, will allow us to say something about the other analysis planes. This conclusion may be trivial, but it should be drawn nevertheless. The usefulness of the research technique's content analysis is dependent on the set of questions. This is because the set of questions determines the choice of analysis categories, and because these are variously suitable for communicating, on the basis of the text, information about the information- and reality planes.

4.3.3 Schools of thought

Both Levine and Petersson present the result of their analysis in the form of so-called *schools of thought*. These are analytical constructions which have been formulated on the basis of the textual content differentiated with the aid of the analysis categories. To indicate this textual relation, Petersson excludes from the running text all allusions to the involved policy process by, for instance, consistently abstaining from mentioning the names of the actors who delivered the texts. This relation to the texts makes it less remarkable that an actor can reappear in a number of schools of thought.¹³⁾ This merely means that he has changed his views or that his argumentation includes disparate thought elements that allow his text to be placed now in this school of thought, now in another.¹⁴⁾ With this way of looking at things, the time dimension is of less interest. For instance, Petersson says that the power process "has been 'frozen'."¹⁵⁾

Schools of thought are thus constructed by combining texts with the same content in regard to one or more of the categories of analysis. Different

13) Petersson 1964, p. 28; cf. Levine 1963, pp. VII, 10.

14) Cf. George 1959 B, p. 17 f.

15) Petersson 1964, p. 24.

school distributions can be obtained from the same material depending on which category of analysis is chosen as the basic category. The analytical intention must decide the choice here. The classification of the texts often involves considerable difficulties, some of which Levine indicates in the following quotation:

Some individuals will adhere to a school on most of their recommendations but diverge on some specific issues; some will be close to the borderline and be more difficult to classify precisely; a few may be assignable to a particular school on the basis of unconditional recommendations which provide the sole basis of this classification but will *sound* more like members of another school in terms of their long-run, not-now-achievable goals.¹⁶⁾

Before the classification of the texts can begin, interpretations of the meaning of words and expressions are usually necessary. No open report of interpretations will be given here for practical reasons. A report of this nature can have little meaning for a debate that is on “the newspaper and political everyday language level”.¹⁷⁾

It is not in itself inconceivable that it would be possible to place every single text in its own special school of thought. However, we would be unable to achieve the basic objectives of the school of thought technique; namely, to present an easily surveyable picture of the debate. The combination of texts into schools of thought must therefore, to some extent, result in a pedagogic simplification of the patterns of argument. Levine points this out by describing a school of thought as “an ideal type rather than a precise real-world category”.¹⁸⁾

All categories of analysis in the analytical scheme presented here can be used as bases for classifying the texts into schools of thought. The dissertation’s set of questions, however, makes it natural to choose the means category that is based on the five decentralization variables. To the extent that there are differences between the texts in an already delimited school of thought, we can speak of a faction in the school (i.e. a number of texts in a school have some quality which distinguishes them from the other texts in the school).

It is quite obvious that the quality of the textual material determines the possibilities of structuring schools of thought to a considerable extent. This is particularly obvious when we analyse a set of arguments produced by “ordinary politicians” — as in this work. We could here reckon on a considerably less interlocking and rational set of arguments than we would expect for instance from political philosophers. The often fragmentary presentations of the texts are not the least cause for problems. It can be thought,

16) Levine 1963, p. 45.

17) Vedung 1971, p. 53 f.

18) Levine 1963, p. 44 f.

for instance, that the actors only discuss certain aspects, that important elements of thought are omitted, and that circumstances obvious to the actors are not mentioned on the whole. The individual actor is often influenced in his arguments by the direction of the entire debate; therefore we can get a skewed picture of the priorities of the actor as they are found at the information plane. This includes other problems which refer to the perception- and decision mechanisms of the actors.¹⁹⁾

If we choose very "broad" schools of thought, the quality of the material plays a lesser role perhaps than when we try far-reaching differentiations. The former alternative, however, can mean that the analysis loses in interest because of lack of nuances, whereas the latter alternative can mean that we lose the pedagogic advantage of the school of thought technique, namely to present relatively simple patterns of arguments in a surveyable amount.

The actor's priorities are a further problem. On the textual plane, this is a question of which sets of arguments the actor wants to appear as important and which to appear unimportant. The texts often contain explicit priorities, i.e. the actor, for instance, points out the goals he considers important and the factors in the situation that primarily justify the recommended lines of action. How should one proceed if the texts do not contain such explicit priorities? Sometimes, some form of quantitative content analysis is employed to use frequency measurements to decide the actor's assessments. These measurements, however, only provide "the frequency with which given content characteristics occur either singly or in conjunction with one another".²⁰⁾ The technique in question is, moreover, so extremely work demanding that it needs to be specially justified each time it is applied.²¹⁾ When, as in this work, the interest lies in illustrating statements about the means that can be used to achieve certain goals in certain situations, the qualitative, non-frequency content analysis ought to be more meaningful.

19) Cf. Vedung 1974, p. 59 ff.

20) George 1959 B, p. 8; cf. George 1959 A, p. 78 f.; Merrit 1966, p. 46.

21) Cf. Cartwright 1953, p. 447 ff.

Chapter 5

Decentralization debate in the 1850s

The Swedish administration during the 1850s was highly centralized. The political system (the State) was deconcentrated to regional level (through the county governor's offices) and to local level (through individual services). There was some decentralization at regional level to more or less temporary "committees". The decentralization which despite everything existed permanently concerned the local level and can be said to have been particularly modest in extent.

What objectives are advanced by the actors who work for an expanded decentralization in this situation? Based on the brief description of the value allocation organization, one of the hypotheses in the foregoing (cf. 2.3.3) seems to apply:

In a society with a centralized allocation of values (concentrated or deconcentrated), actors who recommend decentralization can be expected to do so in order to achieve the fulfilment of values by "participation conditions".

The hypothesis is only being tested on textual material; therefore the result cannot refer to more than the textual plane. The debate covers the question of which transfer means the political system should introduce in order to achieve its goals, i.e. it deals with the same concepts as appear in the model. The statements about this problem are thus taken from a debate on policy level. The policy itself, from the standpoint taken here, is of less interest. The actors in the political process are not of interest other than in their capacity as deliverers of the texts, a matter that is solely reported in the footnotes. The main function of the chapter is to reconstruct the decentralization schools of the 1850s as they appear in the debate with regard to descriptions of situations, the means of decentralization, and the goals that the actors claim to have had for their decentralization activities.

5.1 The structuring of the schools of thought

The material quite naturally determines to a considerable extent the possibilities that exist for structuring schools of thought. The analysis is based on

two types of material contemporary with the debate involved, namely the press and the Riksdag proceedings. In general, it concerns material that is particularly disparate in a number of aspects. The total mass of text covers *circa* 1500 pages of the Riksdag proceedings and about 200 articles from the daily press. The Riksdag proceedings and about 10 daily papers have been systematically examined for the period 1850—1860 concerning local government questions.

The different texts show great variations both in extent and in content. There are big detailed proposals for a Swedish local government system (this mainly refers to the official report presented by the government to the 1859/60 Riksdag), and at the other end of the scale, there are fragmentary contributions in the Riksdag debate and the press. If the content of the material is regarded from the dimension “practical-theoretical” its disparate composition appears even more obvious. There are texts with highly “theoretical” discussions about the decentralization problems in general, and there are those that contain practical discussions about the technical formulation of individual paragraphs in the proposed bills. The latter were perhaps of most interest to the 1859/60 Riksdag, when there was a complete bill to work on.

During most of the studied period, the decentralization discussion was pursued at a “theoretical” level. This applies mainly to the actors who argued for increased decentralization. To some extent, the explanation of this can be found in their tactical intentions. The advocates of decentralization often found it advantageous to suggest only the intended course of the reform rather than to make complete legislative proposals. The view is well expressed in the pro-decentralization committee report of the 1856—58 Riksdag: “Experience has shown how these complete proposed bills have so far been received. Those who have considered that they ought to oppose the matter itself have most easily pursued this objective by turning against the formulation, which in a subject as little treated as this can hardly avoid exposing several weak aspects.”¹⁾ Otherwise, as was often pointed out in the debates, the intention of the activities was to obtain a basis for a *request* for expansion of the existing self-government institutions. For the moment, it was necessary to establish a principle not to present a complete proposal for a bill.²⁾

The material reveals neither a decisive course of development nor any decisive changes during the period. In policy, there was a trend towards increasing numbers of supporters of decentralization, i.e. more and more people agreed with the general recommendation “for expanded local government institutions”.

1) ABEU 56/58, No 127, p. 52.

2) The view is held by, for instance, *introducers of bills*: af Ugglas RoA 50/51 2, p. 130; RoA 53/54 2, p. 90 f.; RoA 56/58 1, p. 41; Tersmeden RoA 53/54 9, pp. 373, 386; Stolpe Bg. 53/54 app., p. 456; Johansson Bd 56/58 2, p. 246 f.; and debaters in the Riksdag: Traneus Pr 53/54 6, p. 283 f.; v. Sten-ding RoA 56/58 1, p. 70; Andersson Bd 56/58 9, p. 55.

The nature of the material does not permit a more radical structuring of schools of thought. The different texts show no distinct differences between schools in their use of the means of decentralization. It is therefore necessary to combine all texts *in favour of expanded local government institutions* (as it says in the terminology of the texts) into one decentralization school.

Another problem is that the texts only exceptionally indicate relations between individual means variables and goals. The hypothesis in question in itself only demands that the decentralization means can be elucidated without consideration of its subvariables. The differences in means-constructions presented by the actors can hardly be regarded as sufficient to establish different schools of thought. The possibilities of structuring the texts on the basis of goals and the situation variables are still to be investigated. It is difficult to find any pattern concerning goals. There are differences in the situation descriptions of the texts with regard to certain points. These cannot be related to differences in goals or means.

The sole decentralization school will be described with regard to its means variables (on broad lines), a situation description, its conditions, its values, and the relations between the two latter. Fig. 13 illustrates the scope for analysis that the texts offer in regard to goals and means.

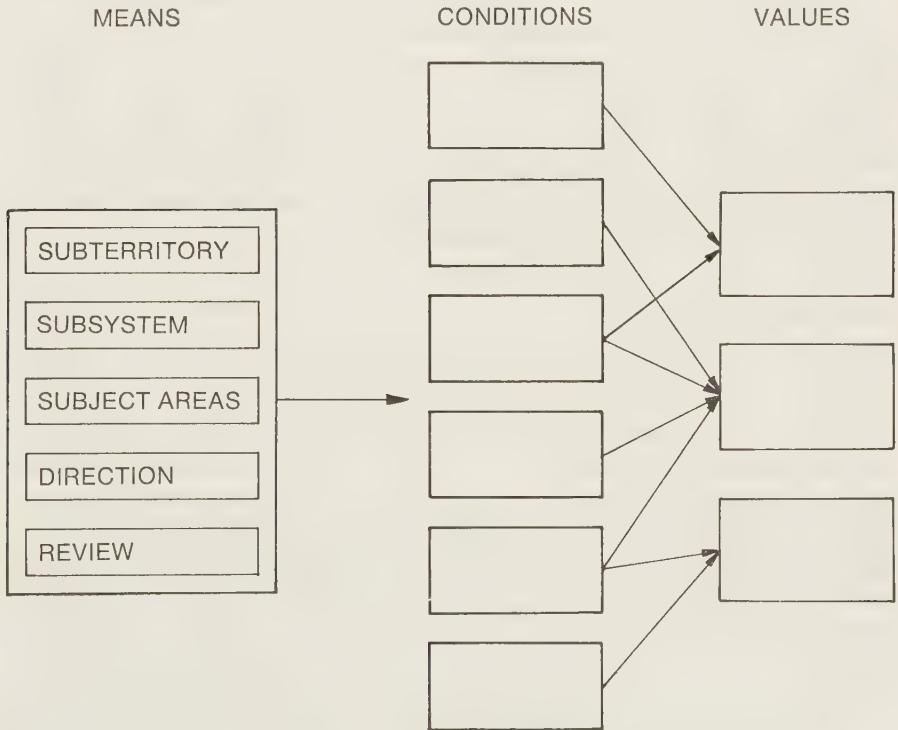


Fig. 13. Analysis possibilities with regard to means and goals (the 1850s)

The material also naturally includes texts that *oppose* an expansion of local government institutions. It is well possible that these texts could be considered as a centralization school. Unfortunately, however, they are of quite another kind than the decentralization texts. The arguments are scarcely “theoretical” and are mainly devoted to criticizing the decentralization proposals. This material permits little or no construction of schools. The possibilities that might have been offered by the use of other debate material cannot be utilized because of practical reasons. This counter argument is none the less of interest for giving a picture of the decentralization school, particularly its prognoses and situation descriptions; therefore it will be reported together with the refutations of the decentralization school (cf. 5.5).

5.2 Decentralization means

In order for the decentralization model to be useful for the analysis of empirical material, it is naturally advantageous that it is easy to apply. Even a brief survey of the material indicates that the discussion of the decentralization problems lies close to that of the model. Sometimes this even applies to the words. There is an organism aspect that sometimes appears in the material that has similarities to the system terminology of the model.¹⁾

The description of the decentralization variables does not aim at a detailed examination of the many different proposals included in the total mass of text. According to the information in the texts, many of these proposals originated chiefly to function as bases for discussion. An indication of the typical qualities of the variables that are specially pointed out in the debate has been judged to be of greater interest. The end result of reconstructing the means might therefore be a kind of ideal type.

5.2.1 Subterritory

The principal subterritories are *the parish*, *the town*, and *the county*. On a few occasions, *the jurisdictional district*, an intermediate stage between regional and local level, is also discussed. In every case, it is a question of areas that at the time had, or had earlier had, their own political subsystems. In general, it seems necessary for a subsystem to be associated with historically defined areas. This is probably related to the general concept of a subterritory. The commune, in its capacity of being both a subterritory and a subsystem, is interpreted as something natural and original, or as the expression goes: “People create republics and monarchies, but the commune originates by itself.”²⁾

1) Cf., e.g. prop 59/60, No 73, p. II f.; Tersmeden RoA 56/58 1, p. 150 f.; af Ugglas RoA 56/58 11, p. 80; Göteborgs Handels- och Sjöfartstidning 31.10.1860.

2) Lallerstedt Bg 56/58, app., p. 160; cf. ABEU 56/58, No. 127, p. 38.

There is an obvious approach to creating a complete communal construction. It is not a matter of “patching up” an old system, but of building a radical and new construction — albeit on historical ground.

5.2.2 Subsystem

The shape of the subsystem is discussed here from two angles. The first concerns the problem of who is to appoint the subsystem authorities; the other, of how many levels are to be included in the total communal organization.

The basis for the subsystem will be “self-government of the people”. It seems obvious that faced with the choice between “absolute monarchy and *centralization*, or democracy and *local government* (decentralization)”, a variant of the latter is to be preferred.³⁾ An essential condition for the survival and well-being of the commune is that all its employees be chosen by its members and not by the state.⁴⁾ Within this framework, generally accepted by the school, there are various opinions about such matters as meetings of subsociety members to take decisions directly, meetings of representative assemblies and the extension of voting rights. In the latter case, there is no general enthusiasm to be more democratic. The standpoints here vary from *broad democratic grounds* to *enlightened members of the commune*.⁵⁾ The opinion on direct and indirect government is conditioned by practical considerations. It appears, for instance, in the following definition of a commune: “What is called a *commune* in its most general sense is a group of people who associate with one another in order to look after their joint affairs there and then or else through their representatives.”⁶⁾

As far as the level aspect is concerned, interest is concentrated on the regional level where there is no communal organization. What is required is a radical construction so that the parish boards will not “stand isolated, powerless and despised”.⁷⁾ The regional organization should be “a link between the rulers and the ruled, equally profitable to both”.⁸⁾ This organization is called a county council.

5.2.3 Subject areas

Subject areas suitable for decentralization are generally stated to be those that refer to the commune’s “own affairs”.⁹⁾ It is argued that it is possible to distinguish subject areas belonging to the commune from those belonging

3) Folkets Röst 11.5.1853; cf. Aftonbladet 2.6.1856.

4) Lallerstedt Bg 56/58, app., p. 161; cf. ABEU 56/58, No. 127, p. 38; Pehrsson Bd 56/58 3, p. 93.

5) Cf., e.g., af Ugglas RoA 50/51 1, p. 170; Janzon Pr 59/60 8, p. 366.

6) Aftonbladet 2.6.1856.

7) Tersmeden RoA 56/58 1, p. 152; cf. af Ugglas RoA 50/51 1, p. 167 f.; Stolpe Bg 53/54, app., p. 453 f.; Carlsson ABEU 50/51, No. 72, p. 22; Cederschiöld RoA 59/60 11, p. 152 f.

8) Björnstjerna RoA 56/58 1, p. 339.

9) Aftonbladet 15.9.1851; cf. Stolpe Bg 53/54, app., p. 452 f.; ABEU 56/58, No. 127, p. 38.

to the state.¹⁰⁾ This is demonstrated by enumerations and descriptions, although these are vague. In the latter case, it is thought that communal subject areas are those that directly originate in the commune and whose effects directly touch the commune.¹¹⁾ No account of the communal subject areas as enumerated in the texts will be given here. However, one subject area will be considered in fuller detail because it is interpreted as completely central, namely the right to charge taxes.¹²⁾

The allocation of values performed by the people will be paid for by the same people without state intervention. "Communal expenses should thus be covered by communal payments or collections. This is right according to the principle".¹³⁾ Nothing contributes more to centralization than the fact that the self-government institutions receive state grants. "Instead of encouraging the independence of the people, the institutions are thus changed into new cogwheels in the state's big centralization works . . ."¹⁴⁾

The central importance obviously attributed by the school to the right to tax is further emphasized by its connexion to conditions described as fundamental. This is one of the few points where relations between individual decentralization subvariables and conditions are explicitly reported in the texts. The condition that the right to charge taxes is mainly connected to is the public spirit. The right to charge taxes is interpreted as a prerequisite if the self-government institutions are to attract interest from the members of the commune. If this is missing, the means itself for developing a commune spirit is lacking.¹⁵⁾ Sometimes, it is stated to be more or less necessary from the standpoint of definition. "The rights of the commune to tax itself for its common needs, by determining the contributions its members are to pay for such purposes, are based on the concept of the commune and have never been questioned."¹⁶⁾

5.2.4 Direction

Direction has earlier been discussed with regard to the reduction in direction indicated by a decentralization of the powers of taxation (cf. 5.2.3). The two variables, direction and review, are sometimes more generally discussed in terms of "communal independence".¹⁷⁾ The local government institutions must be independent. "If they are the dependants of the state, they will also be changed into the nature of charwomen to the bureaucracy."¹⁸⁾ The com-

10) Cf., e.g., Göteborgs Handels- och Sjöfartstidning 25.7.1854; 10.10.1855; Aftonbladet 15.9.1851.

11) Nya Dagligt Allehanda 17.9.1860; cf. Prop. 59/60, No. 73, p. XI f.

12) Cf. Aftonbladet 11.3.1852, 26.4.1852, 13.9.1851, 15.9.1851; Stolpe Bg 53/54, app., p. 455; Johansson Bd 53/54 2, p. 272.

13) Aftonbladet 11.3.1852.

14) Aftonbladet 26.4.1852; Björck Bg 53/54 4, p. 830.

15) af Ugglas RoA 53/54 2, p. 100; cf. ABEU 56/58, No. 127, p. 49; Prop. 59/60, No. 73, p. XIII; Hamilton RoA 53/54 2, p. 98.

16) Prop. 59/60, No. 73, pp. XXIII, XIII.

17) Aftonbladet 28.10.1852; cf. *ibid.* 15.9.1851; Nya Dagligt Allehanda 17.9.1860.

18) Aftonbladet 28.10.1852.

munne merely becomes a “dead body” without communal freedom (“i.e. the right, freely and without restrictions from the higher authorities of the state, to attend to the internal affairs of the commune”).¹⁹⁾ There is no way in which the state can more completely and at less cost, “extend its activity down to the lowest circles of public life, than by transferring some part of the government to the commune’s locally elected governors.”²⁰⁾

The advantage of a low degree of direction is also expressed more fundamentally: if something useful is to be done, the first condition is “not to bind the authority that is given the task by too rigid regulations. This rule is generally valid — perhaps even more so in the present situation where it is a matter of an institution that needs to be provoked into life and activity.”²¹⁾

5.2.5 Review

There are seldom any theoretical discussions about the review problems, although naturally they are given attention in the various proposals. However, there is no doubt about the basic view: over the commune, there should be an authority that can correct possible irregularities. If we consider the review forms, we find both active and passive forms, of which two, appeal²²⁾ and submission, are presented here.²³⁾ The review unit is tied to the political system. Special interest is devoted to the relations between the county governor and the county councils.²⁴⁾

5.2.6 “Ideal types” for the means

Only a partial description of the school’s means of decentralization has so far been given. The following summary is intended to emphasize its characteristic features. What is obtained can be said to be the school’s “ideal type” for decentralization. It can be briefly described as follows:

subterritory: the areas must be related to historically defined units on several levels,

subsystem: the members of the subsociety must govern themselves. This can take place directly or through their representatives. There must be several levels of subsystems in the total construction. The regional level is specially emphasized,

subject areas: the allocation of values must apply to their own local affairs. A basic requirement is that the subject area: powers of taxation should be decentralized,

19) Lallerstedt Bg 56/58, app., p. 160.

20) Ibid. p. 160 f.

21) Hamilton RoA 53/54 2, p. 90; cf. Prop 59/60, No. 73, p. XI f.

22) Cf., e.g., Johansson Bd 53/54 2, p. 274 f.

23) Cf., e.g., Stolpe Bg 53/54, app., p. 457; ABEU 59/60, No. 161, p. 5.

24) Cf., e.g., Stolpe Bg 53/54, app., p. 456.

direction: the political system must be able to direct the subsystem's allocation of values, but the main principle: "greatest possible autonomy for the subsystems" must be valid,

review: the political system must have possibilities of reviewing the subsystems.

5.3 Situation description

To completely reconstruct the *situation description* of the decentralization school in all its variables would require material of a much broader scope than is used here. The debate about "the communal question" permits elucidation of the school's situation description only in limited sectors and no textual material apart from that has been considered. Because of this limitation, which unfortunately is inescapable for practical reasons, this section must be relatively unambitious. The possibility of producing the situation descriptions in a few areas with relatively extensive material has been chosen as a possible way out. Two points in particular have been judged important for the analysis; these can be formulated in the following questions:

Do the existing local government institutions function?

Do people act with public spirit?

Public spirit, synonymous with commune spirit, civic spirit, &c., means approximately: an interest for and engagement in public affairs. As will be seen in the following, the school sees a very close relation between public spirit and the ability of the communes to function effectively.

The statements that give information about the situation are often found in clauses where other types of statements also occur. This means that statements of situation will recur in the section that discusses decentralization goals. Moreover, much of what is found in this section will reappear in the closing section which covers the counter arguments and their refutations.

5.3.1 Do the existing local government institutions function?

The answer to the first question: "do the existing local government institutions function?", is a more or less emphatic *no*. The texts where the self-government institutions in question are given a positive, though weak, appraisal contain reservations of various kinds. They say, for instance, that the existing institutions naturally have their limitations, but that they can accomplish much good, especially if an efficient and competent person occupies the chair.¹⁾ There are also texts that suggest that parish boards

1) Månsson Bd 53/54 6, p. 337; cf. Nordström Pr 59/60 8, p. 274.

could, with relatively small changes, constitute a basis for a real communal system. However, the opinion about the parish board, as at present constituted, is that it is "rather pitiful and practically stillborn".²⁾ At all events, at present it is inadequate.³⁾

Quite naturally, the lack of subsystems at a regional level is stressed. The subsystems that existed there have long since disappeared. The Swedish local government institutions, which are the oldest in the Nordic countries, have gradually and systematically weakened. "Lacking strength, they are now regarded as almost a bad joke on a big thought."⁴⁾ To the extent that we can still speak of communal freedom, we must turn to the local level: the town and the parish.⁵⁾ The reason that the parish has survived longest of the units in the traditional chain parish-jurisdictional district-county is said to be "its more indestructible nature". The attempt to reform the communal system by introducing parish boards has failed primarily because the main purpose of the reform was to make it more convenient for the state authorities. The result has been a support for "bureaucracy's old Adam".⁶⁾

Mainly two reasons are given to explain the poor condition of the self-government institutions:

1) *the division into too many bodies*: the communal functions in the parishes have been spread among too many bodies. This has made it difficult to staff them all: parish board, vestry board, school board, public assistance board, fire service board, tax assessment board, &c. There are also a few special units at regional level, and the same problem is found there.⁷⁾

2) *too limited competence*: the competence of the nucleus (the parish board) of the local communal organization is restricted to: supervision of public health services, instigation of investigations of cases where mothers have accidentally choked their children, control of the disobedience of servants to their masters, the promotion of general moral conduct and finally the most difficult task of acting as the poor relief board.⁸⁾ A more readily surveyed appraisal along similar lines is that the parish boards are really only a kind of disciplinary board, and do not even function as such,⁹⁾ or put picturesquely: they seem to be "intended as worldly adjuncts created for the convenience of the clergy, as a kind of sheriff's assistant".¹⁰⁾ One limitation on their competence, which must be considered inconvenient against the background of the ideal types of means for decentralization, is that the boards are restricted in their rights to charge taxes.¹¹⁾

2) Aftonbladet 1.7.1856.

3) Pehrsson Bd 56/58 3, p. 93.

4) Björnstjerna RoA 56/58 1, p. 339.

5) Stolpe Bg 53/54, app., p. 453.

6) Tersmeden RoA 56/58 1, p. 152, RoA 53/54 9 p. 373.

7) Raab AC, RoA 53/54 2, p. 95 f.; Ekholm Bg 53/54 4, p. 825; Cassel Bg 53/54 4, p. 829; Bore 13.1.1851.

8) ABEU 56/58, No. 127, p. 43.

9) af Ugglas RoA 50/51 2, p. 108.

10) Tersmeden RoA 53/54 9, p. 373.

11) cf. af Ugglas RoA 59/60 11, p. 163.

Another reason for the lack of usefulness of the parish boards is that Sweden is too thinly populated to enable anyone to obtain sufficient benefits from the troubles and costs of a mere commune at a local level.¹²⁾

5.3.2 Do people act with public spirit?

In the appraisal of the occurrence of public spirit, there is greater latitude within the school than there is in its appraisal of the function of existing local government institutions. Those who consider that there is a sense of commune spirit seek support for their opinion in an appraisal of the effects of the parish boards in this respect. Because the boards are elected, they have introduced a more general spirit of activity.¹³⁾ There are also criteria of an increasing public spirit. It has been expressed for example in the creation of County Agricultural Associations and agricultural meetings, and in some places, even in the creation of Jurisdictional District Guilds.¹⁴⁾ Throughout the country, the parish boards attract great interest from the members of the communes.¹⁵⁾ An intermediate standpoint is somewhat doubtful. It is emphasized that it is obvious that there was once a sense of public spirit in Sweden. It has grown weaker through the centuries, but despite all attempts to suffocate it, it still remains — even though dormant.¹⁶⁾ Those who insist that there is no commune spirit advance as reason the unsuitable form of the existing self-government institutions. As it is, a definite form is lacking in which the public spirit can express itself.¹⁷⁾ The government takes care of everything; therefore nothing remains for the communes to decide.¹⁸⁾ Naturally, it is not surprising that public spirit is missing, because the communes are denied the right to decide in their own affairs.¹⁹⁾

The current recruitment situation is discussed as a criterion of the status of the public spirit. The splintered and powerless local government institutions naturally have difficulties in recruiting members. This should be interpreted as a result of the absence of public spirit and is hardly surprising: "Who wants to waste his time sitting on our parish boards distributing charity?"²⁰⁾ The systematic attempts to destroy the commune spirit, which have persisted for the past 170 years, have produced results. It therefore seems strange to complain now of the absence of public spirit.²¹⁾

The school also includes a nuanced opinion that considers that commune

12) af Ugglas RoA 50/51 1, p. 167.

13) Carlander Pr 53/54 6, p. 289; cf. Sahlström Bd 53/54 6, p. 335; Aftonbladet 29.9.1851.

14) Pehrsson Bd 53/54 6, p. 343; cf. Söndén Pr 53/54 6, p. 292.

15) Raab CA, RoA 56/58 1, p. 189.

16) Aftonbladet 7.6.1856; cf. *ibid.* 1.7.1856.

17) Sköldberg Bd 56/58 9, p. 49 f.; Dalman RoA 59/60 11, p. 164; Thomée Bg 56/58 1, p. 132; Göteborgs Handels- och Sjöfartstidning 25.7.1853.

18) Sahlström Bd 53/54 6, p. 335.

19) Raab AC RoA 53/54 2, p. 95.

20) Björnstjerna RoA 56/58 1, p. 339; cf. Ekholm Bg 53/54 4, p. 825.

21) Tersmeden RoA 53/54 9, p. 374.

spirit exists, but that it is better developed in some parts of the country than in others. In some places, people are very interested in the problems of their commune.²²⁾

If we consider these apparently disparate appraisals of the situation, the school appears to include elements that well justify the division of the school into sub-schools. The differences, however, are to a large extent more apparent than real. This is shown by the motivations for the recommendations if by nothing else. Those who consider that public spirit exists can easily recommend local government institutions; others say that the introduction of institutions seems to encourage a latent public spirit. There is some ambivalence between the opinions that “there is a sense of public spirit” and that “the sense of public spirit is latent”. It must be obvious that these differences can hardly be seen as establishing schools; this view is strengthened by the fact that the differences in the description of the situation cannot be related to differences in other analysis variables.

5.4 Decentralization goals

It is impossible with the available material to reconstruct the opinions held by the decentralization school on the relations between individual means variables and goals (cf. 5.1). However, there are a number of statements about the relations between conditions and values. As far as possible, the conditions will be reported in their relation to each value, and after that the non-value-related conditions will be discussed. The material will be used to discuss the hypothesis about the “participation conditions” and to reconstruct the relations between conditions and values apparent to the decentralization school.

5.4.1 Values

The texts of the decentralization school include three values: *freedom*, *stability*, and *prosperity* (cf. Fig. 14). These values can be said to be placed high in the hierarchy of goals. They also can be said to constitute goals for means apart from decentralization. The texts do not contain any definitions of the values. However, the approximate meaning is relatively clear from the context. Naturally, it is not inconceivable that different actors put different significances on the words. But no more decisive differences have been established in that respect, and small shades of difference have not been given any attention.

Prosperity is the value that presents the fewest problems to attempts to establish its meaning. The word means the same as in normal linguistic usage,

22) Larsson Bd 56/58 9, p. 48 f.; Thomander Pr 53/54 6, p. 291.

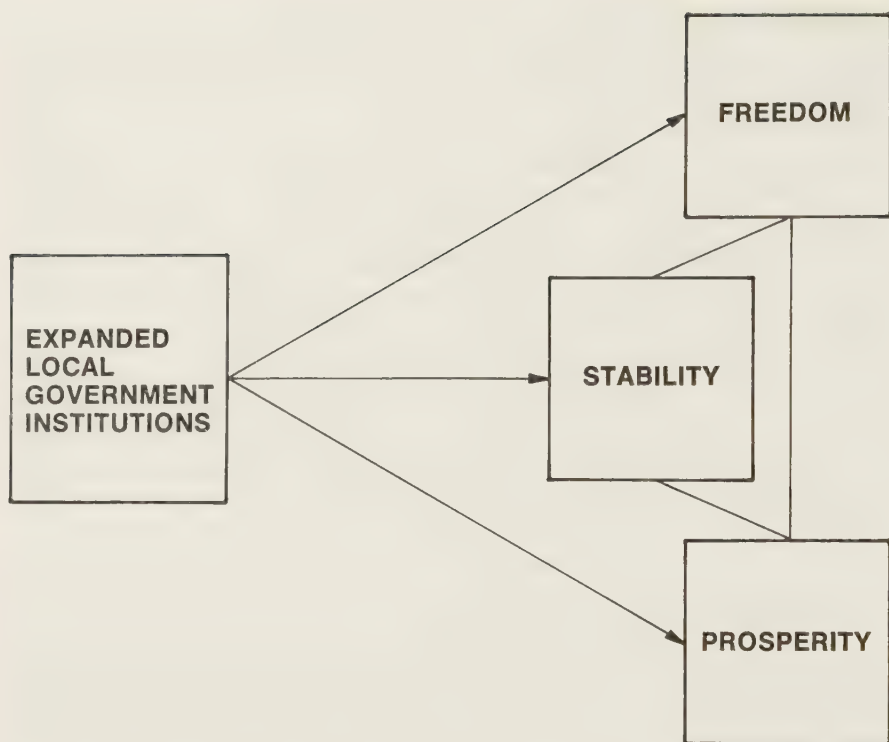


Fig. 14. Decentralization means and values

i.e. approximately “good material standard”. It is somewhat more difficult to establish the meaning of the two remaining values. Perhaps their meaning becomes clearer if we describe their antitheses. The antithesis of *stability* can be said to be “revolution and upheavals”, and the antithesis of *freedom* (or “civic freedom”): “despotism and oppression”. In the latter case, the emphasis lies mostly in a constitutional regime with certain popular features. As has already been shown in the means section (cf. 5.2.2) this regime can be more or less democratic. The value of stability is also attributed to a regime of the constitutional type. This applies to the stability of both the existing system and the one we would get after a parliamentary reform. Evidence of the use of values in accordance with the meanings presented here follows in the sections below.

The mutual relations of the three values are expressed in different ways. They are generally either mentioned together or are said to stand in a functional or causal relation to one another. However, it is not possible to find a clear pattern in these relations and too great an importance should not be attributed to these differences. There is no intentional conflict of values in the texts. Some texts mention all three values:

Freedom . . . ultimately depends on the spirit of the local government institutions involved and on the manner of government encouraged by this spirit. . . . Those societies . . . in which a communal life is indicated, fitted into suitable forms, have thus a political strength and moral resistance, at the same time as a powerful means for material development, against which each attempt at upheaval must sooner or later fail.¹⁾

The values also occur in pairs in all three possible combinations. Freedom and prosperity are mentioned side by side:

Centralization also leads to despotism and misery just as certainly as local governments lead to freedom and prosperity.²⁾

The same relation can also be expressed negatively, as in the statement that it is the extension of the governmental power to matters that should be the concern of local government that hinders “the nation’s future prosperity, freedom, and happiness”.³⁾

Freedom and stability are also mentioned together:

Attempts have been made . . . , independent of the practical arrangement of communal freedom, to lay the foundations of free constitutions, but the events have, more than once, displayed the precariousness of these attempts. They resemble buildings founded on sand, which are soon overthrown, now by the frenzy of the people, now by the misuse of power by the governing bodies.⁴⁾

There are also examples of these two values being expressed negatively, as in the following quotation, where “allows . . . itself to be oppressed” is in opposition to freedom, and “thoughtless outbursts” in opposition to stability.

A country where local government reaches the people no more allows itself to be oppressed than to be enticed into thoughtless outbursts.⁵⁾

Of the possible choices of combinations, only that between prosperity and stability remains to be covered. The texts clearly take the line that prosperity leads to stability. The safest way to “avoid political unrest and political persuasion . . . is through a widely shared prosperity throughout the country and the consequent well being”.⁶⁾

The conclusion seems to be that freedom and stability and freedom and prosperity exist side by side. The relation between prosperity and stability is indicated by the order in which they are mentioned.

1) Aftonbladet 2.6.1856; cf. *ibid.* 15.9.1851.

2) Aftonbladet 28.10.1852.

3) Göteborgs Handels- och Sjöfartstidning 25.7.1853.

4) Stolpe Bg 53/54, app., p. 453; cf. Aftonbladet 26.4.1852; Johansson Bd 53/54 6, p. 334; Raab CA RoA 56/58 1, p. 164; Göteborgs Handels- och Sjöfartstidning 23.4.1856.

5) Björnstjerna RoA 56/58 1, p. 338.

6) af Ugglas RoA 56/58 1, p. 41; cf. af Ugglas RoA 50/51 1, p. 169; RoA 53/54 2, p. 65 f.; RoA 50/51 5, p. 486.

5.4.2 Conditions

The text should show an explicit relation between a condition and a value if the condition is to be classified under that value in the analysis. However, we must allow for the likelihood that many conditions that lack such a relation in texts written by the actors may nevertheless have such a relation in reality. The failure to introduce a value may just be a chance matter of circumstance. For instance: in some of the brief replies that arise directly out of the arguments already mentioned there is often no reason to introduce the entire means-goal relation, as this is obvious to the other actors involved.

The hypothesis that is to be tested with this material is concerned with conditions that were linked with *participation*. The participation of sub-society members in a subsystem's allocation of values produces "participation conditions". For practical reasons, it is not convenient to start by trying to arrange the text according to the different types of "participation conditions". However, it is possible to construct a number of *categories of conditions* in which the conditions can be arranged more naturally. The categories of conditions involved are called: *education*, *relation*, *proximity* and *anti-bureaucracy*. There is no need to define these four categories in any more detail: they are only intended to serve as a preliminary sort for the material. In all essentials, the category designations are used according to normal linguistic usage. Relations can mean relations between central and local levels, relations between regional and local levels within subsystems and relations between different units at the local level. There is even a mention of the relation between the two union countries of Sweden and Norway.

The categories of education and relation are by far the most common. Together, they comprise about 85 per cent of all mentioned conditions. Some overlap exists between the various categories because individual conditions with connections to different values cannot always be placed in the same category or can be related to several categories at the same time. The problem of overlaps has been discounted in this particular instance. In any case, the main purpose of the analysis is to clarify the possible occurrence of "participation conditions".

5.4.3 Freedom

The value of freedom has sometimes been discussed without any mention of intermediate conditions. This direct relation between decentralization and freedom is illustrated by examples from Swedish history and by references to conditions in other countries. It is also established in clauses of the type: all historical experience shows "that civic freedom has its roots in the commune's right and freedom to arrange its affairs and takes its real nourishment and strength from these roots".⁷⁾

7) Stolpe Bg 53/54, app., p. 452 f.

Swedish history is thus said to offer a good basis for this argument. When the old society, with its ancient communal institutions, was swept away by the absolute monarchy, the old civic freedom disappeared at the same time.⁸⁾ The school attributes corresponding circumstances to other countries. Local government suits all regimes except the despotic. It is found in aristocratic England as well as in the democratic United States, and is thus compatible with both monarchistic and republican forms of government.⁹⁾ As opposed to this, the reader is referred to France (and here, too, the aspect of stability is introduced) where the lack of local government institutions can explain both the 1848 revolution and the 1852 *coup d'état*.¹⁰⁾ Prussia is of special interest in this connexion. Despite the strivings of its rulers for absolute power, despotism has never completely established itself; this can be due to the free communal institutions of the country:

Where free communes are established, no real despotism can be found; only because each supervisor is an autocrat over his subordinates, can the coercive power of the monarch completely penetrate the state all the way down to the lowest circles of the life of the people.¹¹⁾

The reasoning can be summarized in clauses that directly relate decentralization to the value of civic freedom: civic freedom has its prerequisites in the self-government and freedom of the commune.¹²⁾ Centralization, on the other hand, makes the people an easy prey for absolutism.¹³⁾ The same thought, with a slight stability connexion, is expressed in the quotation “developed and strong local government institutions are the safest characteristics of sound freedom”.¹⁴⁾

EDUCATION in relation to the value of civic freedom includes the education category conditions: “political education”, “commune spirit”, “obedience under the law”, “proving ground for members of the Riksdag”, and “anti-bureaucratic action”.

As shown above, the decentralization school considers the basis of freedom to be communal activity. The basic situation for producing a political education is a well-formed communal life where “every blameless citizen has his say”. In the relation associated education argument, the communal activity is called the preparatory class in the big school of political life.¹⁵⁾ Parallels with the school system are often used in the debate, for instance, when it is stated that the local government institutions are to freedom what

8) Raab CA, RoA 56/58 1, p. 165.

9) Lallerstedt Bg 56/58, app., p. 164.

10) Ibid., p. 163 f.

11) Ibid.; cf. Aftonbladet 26.4.1852.

12) Aftonbladet 15.9.1851, *ibid.* 23.8.1853; cf. *ibid.* 7.6.1856; Göteborgs Handels- och Sjöfartstidning 29.1.1856; Stolpe Bg 53/54, app., p. 452 f.

13) Aftonbladet 21.1.1852.

14) Björnstjerna RoA 56/58 1, p. 338.

15) Nya Dagligt Allehanda 17.9.1860.

the primary schools are to science: they bring freedom closer to the people that are being accustomed to a peaceful use of it.¹⁶⁾ To illustrate the effects of communal activity, the reader is referred to the situation in the Swedish towns. These have, at least, had a certain independence; there, if anywhere, is a civic spirit.¹⁷⁾

An opinion that can be described almost as a definition of the term public spirit establishes that communal activity leads to freedom because it teaches the citizen "love for and interest in the whole". Thus, he becomes accustomed to work not only for himself but also for others. Another path to freedom through local government institutions goes via the obedience to law and spirit of orderliness that they create.¹⁸⁾

The condition "anti-bureaucratic action" also occurs. This indicates that the real civic freedom presumes communal self-government and independence. The guardianship "that centralization and its tool bureauacracy have placed over the people" is countered, and a real civic spirit is aroused.¹⁹⁾ Anti-bureaucratic action is thus a condition that belongs to the education category of this analysis.

Another "school argument" is devoted to the effects of communal life on voters and representatives. According to this, he who elects representatives must also have knowledge of how public affairs are to be managed. A way of obtaining this knowledge is by participating in the activity of the commune. The exercise of communal duties will thus function as a political national education. A parish board, which develops into a real communal representation, is "the best nursery for creating both voters and members of the Riksdag".²⁰⁾

RELATIONS. The relation category contains conditions that refer to the relation between system and subsystem. The conditions involved are "commune spirit", "basis for parliamentary reform", "informing the state of the Will of the People", "links in the total administration" and "reduction in numbers of matters dealt with by the state".

One of the basic arguments concerns the importance of public spirit for constitutional freedom at the central level. A free constitution is considered to presume free local government institutions. In itself, it is very easy to create formal free constitutions, but without communal freedom, civic freedom is impossible. The temporarily arrested despotism will sooner or later make itself felt again.²¹⁾ Therefore it is assumed that opponents of the expansion of civic freedom are more afraid of the public spirit in self-governing communes than of the republic, "because they know only too well that the

16) Aftonbladet 23.8.1853; cf. *ibid.* 13.7.1858.

17) Aftonbladet 26.4.1852.

18) Björnstjerna RoA 56/58 1, p. 338.

19) Aftonbladet 15.9.1851.

20) Aftonbladet 13.7.1858.

21) Aftonbladet 23.8.1853.

republican governmental organization can never be upheld without the most widespread self-government in the commune".²²⁾

In the policy-situation concerned, the introduction of a parliamentary reform was under discussion in Sweden. It was natural therefore to link the questions of communal reform and parliamentary reform. Following the argument given above, it is maintained that a parliamentary reform in Sweden presumes communal freedom: "constitutional freedom is based on and is conditioned by the communal freedom and not vice versa; the allodial freedom precedes the parliamentary freedom".²³⁾ As an example of this, reference is made to the development in Denmark. There, communes had been created at the regional level and from these, a general national representation had emerged "on the broadest and most democratic basis, which raised Denmark to one of the most free of all free nations . . ."²⁴⁾

5.4.4 Stability

The stabilizing effect of decentralization is illustrated by examples from various political systems. The reasoning is partly affected by the counter-argument, which assumes that local government institutions act subversively in "a democratic direction". In order to prove the faulty reasoning in this statement, the decentralization school refers to England, which is Europe's most aristocratic country, but has, at the same time, the best developed local government institutions. If we consider the 1848 revolutionary events, we find that one of the countries on the Continent remained calm, namely Belgium, which had the freest communes.²⁵⁾ Another example mentioned as proof of the stabilizing effect of the local government institutions is the United States, which resisted the shocks that struck more centralized systems.²⁶⁾ Empirical observations of this type are summarized in the thesis that the "true 'principles for maintaining society'" have no better guarantee than a well-developed local government.²⁷⁾

EDUCATION. The education category is represented in its relations to the stability value by the conditions: "political education", "commune spirit", "obedience under the law", "proving ground for members of the Riksdag", and "the best to be elected".

The need for political education is motivated by descriptions of the current situation in the country, where sluggishness and political indifference prevail, and by prognoses for its consequences.

22) Folkets Röst 11.5.1853.

23) Aftonbladet 13.7.1858; cf. Göteborgs Handels- och Sjöfartstidning 29.1.1856; Stolpe Bg 53/54, app., p. 453; Carlsson ABEU 50/51, No. 72, p. 19; ABEU 56/58, No. 127, p. 38.

24) Rosenberg Bd 59/60 8, p. 245 f.

25) Björnstjerna RoA 56/58 11, p. 79; cf. Aftonbladet 2.1.1854.

26) Aftonbladet 2.1.1854.

27) Aftonbladet 2.1.1854; cf. Stolpe Bg 53/54, app., p. 454; Östgöta Correspondenten 28.2.1855; Carlsson Pr 53/54 6, p. 290.

However, even if we ignore the fact that sluggishness and indifference are hardly secure elements on which to base a society, it must be noted that they also involve risks because under strong pressures the sluggishness can turn to frenzy, and political ignorance, which gives birth to and is fostered by political indifference, can then be easily deceived and used in intrigues.²⁸⁾

The importance of political education is stressed against this background. It is impossible to change the regime so easily. It is necessary to have a prior political education in which the members of society can learn such things as obedience to law, respect for the rights of others and interest in established customs. If the members of the commune are allowed to take over the care of their own affairs, they will learn to respect the rights of others through which their own are safeguarded.²⁹⁾

It is necessary to appreciate early that the nation's masses will gradually have a dominant influence on the political life of the country. The commune, the country's political education school, will implant in the individual "the political understanding and knowledge without which the future peace of the homeland and possibly its very existence run into danger".³⁰⁾ Sometimes, political education is even explicitly regarded as having a pacifying effect on "democratic" movements. The local government institutions are interpreted as means for channelling the effervescent desire for activity, which is naturally considered praiseworthy in itself, but which is easy to deceive and then becomes alarmed and stormy.³¹⁾ The real danger for the regime would occur if the democratic element was given power without previous political education. Independent local government institutions would offer the best means for achieving this.³²⁾ Stability is therefore greatest in those states that have a free communal system. The reason is that the local government institutions create the civic spirit which is a prerequisite for stability.³³⁾

The participation of the members of the commune in public affairs is also thought to result in other advantages. The self-government institutions will act as a nursery for members of the Riksdag. When the individual is continually involved in public duties, he gradually gains the necessary experience demanded of a representative.³⁴⁾ The voters will learn to distinguish the efficient candidate from the inefficient; therefore the result will be a strengthening of the governmental power and its methods.³⁵⁾ The number of candidates for public duties will also increase. Many who otherwise would never be engaged will be offered the possibility to participate through the local government institutions.³⁶⁾

28) af Ugglas RoA 50/51 1, p. 167.

29) Ibid.; cf. af Ugglas RoA 50/51 5, p. 486; Björnstjerna RoA 56/58 1, p. 338; Carlsson Pr 50/51 5, p. 239 f.

30) af Ugglas RoA 50/51 1, p. 167; RoA 50/51 5, p. 485 f.; cf. Lallerstedt Bg 56/58, app., p. 162.

31) Traneus Pr 53/54 6, p. 285; cf. af Ugglas RoA 50/51 5, p. 486.

32) af Ugglas RoA 50/51 2, p. 131.

33) Carlsson Pr 50/51 5, p. 240.

34) Tersmeden RoA 56/58 1, p. 154.

35) Stolpe Bg 53/54, app., p. 453 f.; cf. af Ugglas RoA 50/51 1, p. 170.

36) Carlsson Pr 50/51 5, p. 239 f.

RELATIONS. The relation category that promotes the stability value includes the conditions: "commune spirit", "links in the total administration", "informing the state of the Will of the People", "basis for parliamentary reform", "reduction in numbers of matters dealt with by the state", "reduce the conflicts between the Estates", and "local knowledge".

According to the school, there is a clear relation between commune spirit and public spirit. It is through interest and activity devoted to the smaller circle that love for the homeland is aroused. Therefore the ability to act for the general good is best developed in one's own small circle.³⁷⁾ "Interest in the public affairs of the home district determines interest in those of the state, and the love for the homeland has its innermost roots in the commune spirit."³⁸⁾ Thus it is necessary to link the individual's interest to that of the state. The best way to produce such a link is to let the communes take charge of "the lower" care of the citizens and the state "the higher" issues of interest.³⁹⁾

Another way to express the shared interests of citizens and state is in organic terms. This way of regarding matters clearly shows that "the state organism has its strongest support in well-organized local government".⁴⁰⁾ According to a more developed analogy, a good governmental regime can no more replace the lack of local government than the heart can replace the other pulses of the body.⁴¹⁾

The decentralization school tries empirically to support the relation arguments by examples from other countries and from Swedish history. It has been shown that "a pure and noble spirit and a calm and orderly activity" have developed in those countries where the inhabitants have been allowed to manage their own affairs in small groups and that this has also exerted a beneficial influence on the state's activity. A state must rest on communal foundations if it is to continue to exist. In those countries where foreign conquest or systematic efforts by their own governments have suppressed the communal spirit, the result has been a rigid, absolute rule with its accompanying instability. In practical terms, this is expressed in conditions that extend from a dictatorship arrayed in representative forms to a "shapeless and unbridled anarchy".⁴²⁾

The school believes that what is said here indicates that local government institutions are of fundamental importance to a state that calls itself constitutional. Sweden lacks such guarantees of stability. Usually, of course, people refer to the press and to public opinion as defenders of the constitutional values. However, they are poor guarantors and on critical occasions they can

37) Carlsson Pr 50/51 5, p. 239 f.

38) Lallerstedt Bg 56/58, app., p. 162.

39) af Ugglas RoA 50/51 5, p. 486.

40) af Ugglas RoA 56/58 11, p. 80; cf. Göteborgs Handels- och Sjöfartstidning 31.10.1860.

41) Tersmeden RoA 56/58 1, p. 150 f.

42) Ibid.; cf. Björnstjerna RoA 56/58 1, p. 338; Lallerstedt Bg 56/58, app., p. 163 f.; Aftonbladet 13.7.1858.

even appear as traitors.⁴³⁾ The Swedish state, which stands on the border between constitutional and absolute rule, has for lack of local government institutions no counterbalance to absolutism and no guarantee of constitutionalism.

Our national parliament is isolated. It is walls of the constitutional system, but, like the Hanging Gardens of Babylon, it hangs in the air unsupported by the communal institutions from which they should arise and to which they should return; they are isolated phenomena, which in and through themselves inspire no hope of durability and strength.⁴⁴⁾

The communal institutions would also provide support for the royal power, which would thus rest on an institution “that extended its branches through all the provinces in the country, through all classes”⁴⁵⁾. The “relation arguments” of the stability value can be summarized as follows: the strength of constitutional governments lies in the “Will of the People”. The local government institutions are expressions or organs of the “Will of the People” and thus offer the “Will of the People” an opportunity to express itself.⁴⁶⁾

All the above-related problems are of immediate interest in the face of a constitutional reform in Sweden. The decentralization school interprets communal freedom as the starting point for parliamentary reform because it believes that it is impossible to find a securer foundation for such a reform.⁴⁷⁾ Common treatment of various issues of interest by the counties will abolish the disputes between the Estates, which is a necessary step if a parliamentary reform is to be carried through. The new representation will be based on a “broader democratic basis”, but will none the less guarantee that “knowledge, insight, and education” are encouraged and given influence.⁴⁸⁾

5.4.5 Prosperity

There are statements in the texts that relate decentralization directly to prosperity. For instance, there are the opinions that local government leads to national prosperity and social progress,⁴⁹⁾ or that local government institutions can be described as a “lever of progress”.⁵⁰⁾

The Norwegian development after the introduction of the Local Government Act is used to illustrate the argument. The idea is that there is nothing apart from the constitution to which the Norwegians attribute so many useful things as their Local Government Act. “It is unbelievable what useful enter-

43) Raab CA RoA 56/58 1, pp. 164, 190; cf. af Ugglas RoA 56/58 11, p. 80.

44) Raab CA RoA 56/58 1, p. 164.

45) Tersmeden RoA 56/58 11, p. 81.

46) Raab CA RoA 56/58 1, p. 165.

47) Stolpe Bg 53/54, app., p. 453; cf. Carlsson ABEU 50/51, No. 72, p. 22, ABEU 56/58, No. 127, p. 50; Aftonbladet 2.1.1854.

48) af Ugglas RoA 50/51 1, p. 170.

49) Östgöta Correspondenten 3.5.1856.

50) Thomée Bg 56/58 1, p. 132; cf. Alströmer ABEU 53/54, No. 110, p. 23.

prises have been started during this short time in all parts of the country.”⁵¹⁾ “Industrial development” in Norway would never have progressed so far had it not been for the Local Government Acts.⁵²⁾

EDUCATION. The education category for the prosperity value includes the conditions “commune spirit”, “activity spirit”, and “obedience under the law”.

It seems to be generally agreed that Sweden has enormous natural resources. What is lacking, according to the decentralization school, is an adequate utilization of these resources. We must therefore try to create “the drive, the industry, and the diligence” that are lacking now, but which the utilization of the natural resources demands. To achieve the required “activity spirit”, there is no “more powerful lever than that laid down in the local government institutions”.⁵³⁾

The argument runs that the Local Government Act will not satisfy its objective of creating prosperity if it is unable to arouse commune spirit. In the commune, the individual will seek his own welfare in the public good.⁵⁴⁾ Self-interest is supposed to motivate much of the citizen’s appreciation of the communal system. The masses are interested in a structure of government that guarantees their well-being. By working in local government institutions, the individual learns “the respect for law and the rights of others, through which his own are safeguarded, and the careful consideration of the present, the caution and the mature examination of each change, without which economic losses can seldom be avoided”.⁵⁵⁾

RELATIONS. Under the prosperity value, there are relation conditions that are somewhat differently formulated from those mentioned earlier. They now indicate relations between the various subsystems as well. Apart from this, and in connexion with the previously made division, there are the conditions “links in the total administration”, “specialized economic legislation”, “commune spirit”, and “reduction in numbers of matters dealt with by the state”.

One variant in relations concerns the awareness of subsystems for one another’s measures. It is assumed that in the present situation the parishes have no information about each other’s activities. This means that they cannot benefit from each other’s experiences. If, on the other hand, a communal construction is accomplished, an action performed in one place will become known everywhere. As communications improve throughout the country, it becomes possible to adopt measures that experience has shown to be useful in one place.⁵⁶⁾

51) Traneus Pr 53/54 6, p. 285; cf. Pehrsson Bd 56/58 9, p. 47.

52) Pehrsson Bd 56/58 9, p. 47.

53) af Ugglas RoA 53/54 2, p. 64; cf. af Ugglas RoA 50/51 2, p. 131 f., RoA 50/51 5, p. 483 f.; Alströmer ABEU 53/54, No. 110 p. 23; Göteborgs Handels- och Sjöfartstidning 29.1.1856.

54) Janzon Pr 59/60 8, p. 366; cf. Aftonbladet 14.9.1860.

55) af Ugglas RoA 50/51 5, p. 486.

56) Månsson Bd 56/58 9, p. 46; cf. Almquist Pr 53/54 6, p. 291; Euren Pr 53/54, 6, p. 287.

Specialized economic legislation is believed to contribute to the growth of prosperity. The intention is that the communes should plan their own economy. Prosperity will then spread to all parts of the country; and in return the state will receive “multifold strength and power for multifold activities”.⁵⁷⁾ Underlying this is the concept of the positive effects of self-interest. Among these are mentioned “mental uplift” and “sharpening of the will”.⁵⁸⁾ Stimulated by individual interest, the local government institutions will force the nation out of its lethargy.⁵⁹⁾

PROXIMITY. The conditions that promote prosperity and are classified under the proximity category include “local knowledge”, “specialized economic legislation”, and “competent and all embracing administration”.

An argument that is often advanced for decentralization refers to the need for different parts of the country to judge their requirements and wishes for themselves. This is thought to apply to Sweden to a particularly high degree. “The length of the country from north to south is approximately 950 English miles, most of its provinces differ from one another in many respects and the situations of cultivation, population and industry consequently differ markedly within the country.” There must therefore be advantages in applying different statutes on economic matters to the different provinces. It seems unlikely that monolithic economic legislation will be suitable for all. On the contrary, it will often happen either that the statute does not fit in anywhere or that it fits one place but not another.⁶⁰⁾ Another aspect of these problems is the need to liberate the state from matters of economic-communal nature, which now unnecessarily occupy the time of the state.⁶¹⁾ This aspect belongs to the relation category however.

The proximity argument covers conditions that were also discussed in the relation section. It concerns the individual’s careful consideration of his own advantage, which is said to lead to activity that is both intellectually and economically beneficial. No central power, however well ordered, can be thought to take account of all local circumstances and thus match the combined energy and application of the local populace. Individual activity alone can create the essential basis for industrial life. Nobody outside the commune can produce advantages and counteract disadvantages as well as its enlightened members can.⁶²⁾

5.4.6 Conditions without an explicit relation to a value

Two thirds of the conditions indicated in the texts have no explicit connection

57) af Ugglas RoA 50/51 1, p. 169.

58) af Ugglas RoA 50/51 2, p. 109.

59) Ibid., p. 131; cf. af Ugglas RoA 50/51 1, p. 168, RoA 53/54 2, p. 64 f.

60) Carlsson ABEU 50/51, No. 72, p. 19 f.; cf. af Ugglas RoA 50/51 1, p. 169, RoA 56/58 11, p. 80; Alströmer ABEU 53/54, No. 110, p. 20 f.; Månsson Bd 56/58 9, p. 46; Sköldberg Bd 56/58 9, p. 49 f.; Andersson Bd 56/58 9, p. 50.

61) Carlsson Pr 50/51 5, p. 240 f.

62) af Ugglas RoA 53/54 2, p. 64 f.; cf. RoA 56/58 1, p. 40.

with a value. They are discussed below under the four categories of conditions already in use: education, relation, proximity, and antibureaucracy. The presentation will be comparatively brief because the arguments are largely the same as in the sections above, the same actors being partly responsible for them.

EDUCATION. In the argument against decentralization, it is often pointed out that the Swedish people show a lack of interest in their local government institutions. To the decentralization school, however, this is just one more argument for the need for local government institutions which can instil the missing commune spirit into the whole nation.⁶³⁾ The problem lies in the insignificance of the existing local government institutions. If all communal organs were combined into one body and this were given greater authority, "the indifference that is now complained of would soon disappear".⁶⁴⁾

The education category also includes conditions of a strongly antibureaucratic nature. The local government institutions are thought to provide the peasants with the opportunity to "emancipate themselves from the dependence in which they have so far been held by bailiff, sheriff and other civil servants". Thus, the national spirit will gradually be roused and the people will learn to express their independent ideas.⁶⁵⁾ The inclination of sub-society members to engage themselves in the activities of the subsystem will then increase. They will gradually develop the ability to manage their own communal affairs.⁶⁶⁾ One condition that can be classified under both the education and the relation categories can be quoted in this connexion: the communal system provides the best guarantee of good training for members of the Riksdag.⁶⁷⁾

RELATIONS. Relation conditions are sometimes given in statements with a pretence to more general validity, such as the assertion that all development proceeds from the lesser to the greater; therefore the commune ought to develop first and then the state.⁶⁸⁾ If commune spirit is to be developed into a more general public spirit, a connecting link is required between the smallest self-government institution on local level and the central state. The county councils, which could provide a real outlet for public spirit, are seen as such a link.⁶⁹⁾ A well-developed local government will benefit not only the subsocieties but also the state. To give an analogy:

The commune is the root of the tree, the State; and the tree gets its nourishment from the juices of the root, and brings forth good and healthy fruit.⁷⁰⁾

63) Petré Bg 50/51 2, p. 618; cf. Cassel Bg 53/54 4, p. 828; Säve Pr 59/60 8, p. 275 f.

64) Ekholm Bg 53/54 4, p. 825.

65) Sahlström Bd 56/58 9, p. 49; cf. Svensson Bd 56/58 9, p. 51.

66) Carlsson Pr 59/60 8, p. 277.

67) Mengel Bd 59/60 8, p. 243 f.; cf. Andersson Bd 56/58 9, p. 50 f.; Aftonbladet 9.10.1860.

68) Andersson Bd 59/60 8, p. 243; cf. Göteborgs Handels- och Sjöfartstidning 16.7.1859.

69) Björck Bg 53/54 4, p. 830 f.; Göteborgs Handels- och Sjöfartstidning 9.11.1860; Aftonbladet 9.10.1860; Björck Bg 59/60 6, p. 664 f.

70) Andersson Bd 59/60 8, p. 243.

As has been pointed out several times, it is obvious that the supporters of decentralization were likely to link the communal problem with the representative problem. The county council is therefore seen as a suitable foundation for the new representative system. Co-operation within county councils can be expected to lead to the abolition of conflicts between the Estates — one of the preconditions for successful parliamentary reform.⁷¹⁾ The people will discover who can be expected to make the best Riksdag members by observing candidates' activities in the communes.⁷²⁾ Communal activity is also said to increase the state's opportunities to obtain information on public opinion. This idea has been expressed in various ways, one of them being that the communes will lend "expression and weight to the general Will of the People".⁷³⁾

Relation reasonings are also pursued in connexion with conditions that do not directly presume decentralization, but can be seen as a side effect of it. According to this argument, the introduction of new local government institutions will improve the management of state affairs. The county councils will take care of a number of matters that, at present, must be solved by the Riksdag. Thus the Riksdags will be shortened because they are not obliged to occupy themselves with a variety of matters of purely local interest. The work of the government will also be eased⁷⁴⁾ as will that of the county governor's offices.⁷⁵⁾ It is not only the state's affairs that will thus be managed better. The same will apply to the decentralized functions, because the communes can themselves take better care of their own affairs than authority can working at a distance.⁷⁶⁾

PROXIMITY. The decentralization school's proximity category includes conditions with a marked participatory aspect. The basis for their approach is a previously reported statement in which the individual is said to be the best judge of his own affairs.⁷⁷⁾ They therefore consider that the administration of local matters is managed "with greater ease and more completely" by communal organs than by state authorities.⁷⁸⁾ One of the reasons for this is said to be that it is easier to survey the activities of one's own small circle, because one has the necessary local knowledge.⁷⁹⁾ As it is at present, many good ideas will never be realized because they lack a forum. One such forum could be provided by the county board, where information is collected on all types of problems within the county.⁸⁰⁾ One consequence of the possession

71) Jönsson Bd 59/60 8, p. 241.

72) Pehrsson Bd 56/58 3, p. 95.

73) Pehrsson Bd 56/58 9, p. 47; cf. Medin Bd 56/58 9, p. 53; Månsson Bd 56/58 9, p. 46; Göteborgs Handels- och Sjöfartstidning 9.11.1860.

74) Carlsson Pr 50/51 5, p. 241; cf. Ekensteen RoA 50/51 1, p. 179; Stolpe Bg 53/54, app., p. 452 f.; Carlsson Pr 59/60 8, p. 277.

75) af Ugglas RoA 50/51 2, p. 111.

76) Lallerstedt Bg 56/58, app., p. 161 f.

77) ABEU 59/60, No. 161, p. 5; cf. Andersson Bd 56/58 9, p. 50.

78) Lallerstedt Bg 56/58, app., p. 161.

79) Carlsson Pr 53/54 6, p. 290.

80) af Ugglas RoA 50/51 1, p. 168.

of local knowledge by the members of the commune is that the most efficient and most worthy are elected to hold public office.⁸¹⁾

In a country as large as Sweden, it is inconceivable that an all-embracing legislation in economic matters could be suitable. The government of the internal affairs of the communes can therefore with advantage be handed over to the communes themselves.⁸²⁾ The people will gratefully receive economic laws that are based on their own wishes and needs and which they themselves have had the chance to discuss.⁸³⁾

ANTIBUREAUCRACY. There are only a few types of conditions and indications of conditions that can be classified under the category of antibureaucracy. The local government institutions serve the important function of safeguarding against the arbitrariness of officials and the disregard of officialdom for the rights and aspirations of the general public.⁸⁴⁾ A very important function of state officials is to simplify the administrative machine. A reduction in the numbers of officials and thus of the nonproductive functions of the state will naturally follow the introduction of the communal system.⁸⁵⁾

5.4.7 Participation conditions

The basic argument over the choice of level for the authoritative allocation of values assumed that the transfer of the allocation of values from the central to the local level had as objective values that could be achieved by "proximity conditions". This means that the implementer has, so to speak, physical proximity to the subsociety.

Proximity conditions can be produced by both decentralization and deconcentration. On what grounds do we choose between them? The primary difference between the two means is that with decentralization the subsociety members themselves implement the authoritative allocation of values within the subsystem. To achieve certain conditions requires participation, which can be furthered through decentralization. This is the basis for the following hypothesis on conditions requiring participation:

In a society in which the allocation of values is centralized (concentrated or deconcentrated), actors who recommend decentralization can be expected to do so in order to achieve fulfilment of values by "participation conditions".

The hypothesis thus indicates that decentralization based on a certain constellation of the means variables leads to participation conditions. Because it is impossible to distinguish with the available material the relations between

81) Lallerstedt Bg 56/58, app., p. 161.

82) Cederschiöld RoA 59/60 11, p. 153.

83) Sève Pr 50/51 5, p. 238.

84) Pehrsson Bd 56/58 3, p. 95.

85) Aftonbladet 9.10.1860.

individual variable values and participation conditions, the relation between “expanded local government institutions” and participation conditions will be discussed. The relation can be formulated as follows: decentralization based on an certain constellation of the decentralization variables leads through participation to participation conditions.

The various condition categories in which the material is classified will now be examined with regard to participation. The category of education exclusively involves conditions that require participation. Complete explanations of how different conditions lead to different values are seldom found. The survey of goals presented above demonstrates this, although the survey is based on texts with considerably more formulated means-end-hierarchies than the average. Therefore only one stage in the relation will be discussed here, although more can be found:

d. leads via participation to political education

„	„	„	„	„	commune spirit
„	„	„	„	„	spirit of activity
„	„	„	„	„	obedience under the law
„	„	„	„	„	education and supply of competent voters and representatives.

The conditions classified under the relation category include participation and other proximity types. Other conditions are also found that can be imagined with any means of transfer. In general, the relation category is considered to lead to conditions advantageous to the entire society, whereas the education category also includes conditions advantageous solely to the sub-society. In the case of the relation category, the statements are often formulated in two stages (eg.: d. leads to commune spirit, which leads to national spirit). As in the previous case, only the first stage will be discussed:

d. leads via participation to commune spirit

„	„	„	„	„	obedience under the law
„	„	„	„	„	expression of the Will of the People
„	„	„	„	„	abolition of Estate disputes
„	„	„	„	„	education and supply of competent voters and representatives

The decentralization school also discusses relation conditions that have no element of participation. In other words, they could equally well occur in cases of deconcentration. It is rather difficult to determine “links in the total administration”, which is very complex and can include conditions of both participatory and other proximity types. There are also relation conditions

that do not involve any type of proximity conditions. "Reduction in numbers of matters dealt with by the state" does not presume any change of level, but is a direct result of the transfer of the allocation of values away from the central authorities. "Specialized economic legislation" has a participation aspect because it contributes towards increased interest in public functions.

The proximity category includes other proximity conditions besides those involving participation. For instance, local knowledge can be imagined without an element of participation. However, the decentralization school assumes a marked element of participation: when the individual must safeguard his own interest, we get sound and thorough administration.

The antibureaucracy category contains relatively few arguments. Where the condition "anti-bureaucratic action" has been considered under other categories, participation has unquestionably been the fundamental element. The arguments under this category mostly concern cost conditions.

To what extent does the material support the participation condition hypothesis? A quantitative determination shows that conditions involving participation are predominant. This refers to the number of different conditions (apart from "reduction in numbers of matters dealt with by the state", they all at some time have participation connexion) as well as to the total number of times the different conditions have been mentioned. Quantitative aspects cannot, however, be used to test the hypothesis. If we try a qualitative appraisal of the importance of the participation conditions (using, for instance, the question: what does the actor give priority to in the text?), we reach the same result. From the texts, it appears as though the actors wish to emphasize the participation aspect. If the question concerns the type of argument advanced in the debate, the participation condition hypothesis must be considered confirmed. But one cannot use it to deduce the actors' real intentions. The analysis is confined to the textual plane.

Independent of which values the actors say they wish to achieve, the conditions are relatively similar. It could be supposed that the conditions are more typical of the means than of the values. It seems highly probable that the supposition is valid for means-end-hierarchies in general: the further down the hierarchy (i.e. the closer to the means), the more typical of the means are the goals, and vice versa: the higher up the hierarchy (i.e. the closer to the values), the less are the goals related to a certain means. It can happen that the decentralization conditions stay relatively stationary whilst the values change from period to period and from actor to actor.

5.5 The counter argument with refutations

As pointed out in the introduction, the counter argument is considerably less deeply laid than the argument for decentralization. Whether this is tactically

conditioned is an open question. In any case, the debate contains no more structured argument on centralization. There is reason to pause for a moment at the decentralization school's appraisal of the motives behind the counter argument. A few points are usually emphasized:¹⁾

- 1) the reform will mean increased costs and trouble for the individual member of the commune,
- 2) the commune spirit is so poor that a reform must fail,
- 3) the reform is unnecessary because the parish boards and County Agricultural Associations already provide an adequate organization,
- 4) there is risk of disputes about authority over central and communal activities. This applies mainly at the regional level where it is feared that the county governor's power of action could be paralyzed by the proposed county councils.

The decentralization school also attributes to the counter argument the motive of seeking to prevent democratic development.²⁾ This investigation, however, is only intended to discuss the motivations in the texts, and they give no guidance in this respect; the statement must therefore be left open.

A survey of the material shows that the four motivations are often discussed in the debate; therefore the dissertation will be arranged accordingly. In each of the four subsections, the refutations by the decentralization school will also be reported.

5.5.1 The reform is unnecessary

The basis for the criticism of the communal propositions is that the existing institutions function well, although they possibly need small changes. There is no absolute centralism in Sweden, which has a representative assembly whose members are taken from all parts of the country.³⁾ The constitutional Swedish regime is no less favourable to freedom than are others.⁴⁾

It was emphasized at the beginning that local government already exists. The scarcely 20-year old reform which contains the statutes about parish boards, vestry boards and school boards needs no real revision because the institutions involved function well on the whole.⁵⁾ If we refer to the county level, we find the County Agricultural Associations which act in the manner of communal organs even though they are free organizations. The objectives set up for the county board are already largely achieved by the Associations.⁶⁾

1) Tersmeden RoA 56/58 1, p. 153; af Ugglas RoA 53/54 2, p. 61 f., RoA 50/51 5, p. 483 f.

2) af Ugglas RoA 53/54 2, p. 61 f., RoA 50/51 5, p. 483.

3) Söderberg Pr 50/51 5, p. 245.

4) Lundblad Pr 50/51 5, p. 242.

5) Björkman Pr 59/60 8, p. 277 f.; Svenska Tidningen 12.5.1853; ABEU 53/54, No. 110, p. 19 f.; Tegnér Pr 53/54 6, p. 286 f.; Pehrsson Bd 53/54 6, p. 339.

6) Mörner RoA 53/54 2, p. 93; ABEU 53/54, No. 110, p. 19 f.; Nordenfelt RoA 56/58 1, p. 185.

The counter argument focuses its comments on the new proposals for county councils. The County Agricultural Associations are well suited to the function of offering inhabitants of the county the opportunity to confer about the more important county matters.⁷⁾ Furthermore, the county governor's office has other ways in which it can obtain information about the "thoughts and wishes" of the general public. It can allow the county inhabitants to elect delegates and thus gain two advantages over the proposed county councils: firstly, it can obtain people with specialist knowledge on the matter under review, and secondly, there is no need to meet so frequently.⁸⁾

Another problem is the quality of the representatives on the county board. This can be expected to be occupied by publicity hunters whereas the well-informed candidates will keep away. The County Agricultural Associations have all the advantages of the county boards without their disadvantages.⁹⁾

Refutation from the decentralization school. The allegations of the counter argument on the undesirability of the reform is largely refuted by arguments that have already been reported in one of the sections describing the situation (cf. 5.3). Therefore only the comments on the County Agricultural Associations will be discussed. Quite naturally the County Agricultural Associations are found in the counties. None the less, they have not been able to replace the existing county committees.¹⁰⁾ There is a more serious objection too: the County Agricultural Associations have a decided weakness in their construction. They are elected by their own members and therefore lack "the essential quality of being the lawful representatives of the county".¹¹⁾ He who argues for the County Agricultural Associations as being local government is obviously unaware of what this is. Self-appointed representatives can never speak for the county's inhabitants. This, as far as can be judged, is evident to the government. When it wants information about the attitudes of the county's inhabitants to different matters, it does not turn to the County Agricultural Associations but to special assemblies appointed for the purpose.¹²⁾ A consequence of the origin of the County Agricultural Associations is that they can never collect payments from the inhabitants of the county.¹³⁾ Nor do they fit in as links "in the large common chain of the social administration"; they differ essentially from the various parish boards, both in composition and in objectives.¹⁴⁾

7) ABEU 50/51, No. 72, p. 17; ABEU 53/54, No. 110, p. 19 f.

8) ABEU 53/54, No. 110, p. 20; cf. Nordenfält RoA 56/58 1, p. 184.

9) v. Troil RoA 50/51 2, p. 102.

10) Tersmeden RoA 56/58 1, p. 154; Östgöta Correspondenten 28.2.1855.

11) v. Hartmansdorff RoA 53/54 9, p. 379; cf. Raab AC RoA 56/58 1, p. 187; Lallerstedt Bg 56/58, app., p. 165; Traneus Pr 53/54 6, p. 283; Aftonbladet 15.11.1855; Ribbing RoA 53/54 2, p. 94 f.

12) Lallerstedt Bg 56/58, app., p. 165.

13) af Ugglas RoA 53/54 2, p. 100; Hamilton RoA 53/54 2, p. 98.

14) Alströmer ABEU 53/54, No. 110, p. 23.

5.5.2 Commune spirit is lacking

The appraisal of the occurrence of communal spirit is very explicit in the counter argument. Public spirit is almost entirely lacking in Sweden.¹⁵⁾ An expansion of the local government institutions is unnecessary; moreover, it is not in accord with the wishes of the general public.¹⁶⁾ The lack of commune spirit is very obvious when attempts are made to fill the posts in the existing communal system.¹⁷⁾ The peasants do not wish to take any positions of trust. They "lack, in general, both inclination and time to devote to unaccustomed tasks".¹⁸⁾ This is exemplified in the debate by reference to recruitment difficulties and to the slight interest that representatives show for this type of work. Those who have with considerable difficulty been recruited for communal posts often show little interest in the work. According to one drastic example, the chairman and the secretary even had to "literally go out into the highways and byways to collect people to form the necessary quorum for making decisions . . ." ¹⁹⁾

The communal functions are interpreted by the general public as a pressing burden.²⁰⁾ If commune spirit is lacking, the self-government institutions become dead and infertile. Because there are already difficulties in filling the communal posts, an expansion can only have further negative results. "To increase the existing communal duties with added duties that have to be performed without compensation for costs and other sacrifices would . . . increase the difficulties of getting the present communal duties performed and possibly suffocate the inclination that already exists for carrying out general tasks."²¹⁾ The Swedish people are not ripe for a more extensive communal freedom. If the Swedish cities and rural communities had an extensive communal freedom similar to that of England and North America, it would cause so many disasters that a large number of people would wish that they had never belonged to such a community.²²⁾ It is not possible to force commune spirit on people. The spirit must be there before the form, and a living spirit probably finds a suitable form for its activity. It is the wrong way round to create the form first and then to try to insert the spirit into it.²³⁾

Refutations from the decentralization school. The standpoints of the decentralization school on the occurrence of public spirit are given in the section about situation description (5.3.2). The decentralization school contains suggestions from those who considered that public spirit existed and

15) Adelborg RoA 53/54 2, p. 101; cf. Svenska Tidningen 10.5.1853, *ibid.* 12.5.1853.

16) Tegnéér Pr 53/54 6, p. 286 f.; cf. ABEU 50/51, No 72, p. 17.

17) Jönsson Bd 53/54 6, p. 336; cf. Svenska Tidningen 10.5.1853; Fröhlich RoA 50/51 1, p. 180.

18) Lundblad Pr 50/51 5, p. 242.

19) Nordenfelt RoA 56/58 1, p. 184 f.; cf. Mörner RoA 56/58 1, p. 186; Tersmeden N RoA 53/54 9, p. 384.

20) Gustafsson Bg 50/51 2, p. 617; Rehbinder RoA 53/54 9, p. 378.

21) ABEU 53/54, No. 110, p. 19; cf. Gezelius Bg 53/54 4, p. 827; Gustafsson Bg 53/54 4, p. 828; Adelborg RoA 53/54 2, p. 101 f.

22) Henschen Bg 56/58 1, p. 125; cf. v. Troil RoA 53/54 2, p. 383.

23) Tersmeden N. RoA 53/54 9, p. 384; cf. Sandberg Pr 53/54 6, p. 289 f.; Runsten Pr 53/54 6, p. 291 f.

from those who considered it did not exist. Its appraisal of the causes of the lack of commune spirit (to the extent that it is thought that such a lack exists) provides the key to the refutations. Here, the idea is that the missing commune spirit can be sought in the limited authority of the communes.²⁴⁾ In order to get any commune spirit whatsoever, a well-ordered communal administration is necessary.²⁵⁾

5.5.3 Risk of disputes over authority

The problem of collisions of authority between the communal and state organs is considered to apply particularly at the county level, where the proposed county councils are expected to obstruct the activities of the county governor's office. The critics of the county councils maintain that the activities of the county governor will be obstructed or even paralyzed.²⁶⁾ They even fear that the county council will develop into a guardian for the county governor.²⁷⁾ An alternative to the county councils is considered to be the County Agricultural Associations, whose activity can be extended²⁸⁾ (cf. 5.5.1).

Another of the counter arguments' points of attack which adheres closely to the decentralization school's allegation that its opponents fear the Power of the People contains arguments that refer to the method of election proposed for the county councils, which are to be elected by general election. They say that this means that they will be elected in a different manner from the national representative body. Uncertainty as to which of the two assemblies expresses the real will of the nation could easily arise. This uncertainty provides a real element of danger: a democratic spirit could easily originate in the popularly elected county councils and lead to a risk of clashes with the Riksdag.²⁹⁾ The dispute over authority thus applies to organs at the central and regional levels.

An argument close to those over the authority of the different elected bodies is concerned with the risk of federalism. Sweden is divided into provinces which it has taken centuries to unite. There is a risk with the county councils that the former schisms could be aroused. The result would be dangerous for the country at war or in revolt.³⁰⁾

Refutations from the decentralization school. Because the county will be economically favoured by the local government institutions, the county

24) Björnstjerna RoA 56/58 1, p. 339; cf. Raab AC RoA 56/58 1, p. 187 f.; af Ugglas RoA 53/54 2, pp. 65, 99; Alströmer ABEU 53/54, No. 110, p. 23.

25) Lallerstedt Bg 56/58 app., p. 166 f.; cf. Aftonbladet 21.7.1854; Petre Bg 50/51 2, p. 618; Ribbing RoA 56/58 1, p. 188; Ekholm Bg 53/54 4, p. 825.

26) Löwenhjelm RoA 50/51 1, p. 178; cf. ABEU 50/51, No. 72, p. 17; Flach RoA 53/54 9, p. 381; v. Troil RoA 50/51 2, p. 99 ff.; Adelborg RoA 53/54 2, p. 102.

27) Hartmansdorff RoA 50/51 2, p. 112 f.

28) Adelborg RoA 53/54 2, p. 102.

29) Cederström RoA 56/58 11, p. 78 f.; cf. Cederström RoA 50/51 1, p. 176 f.; Kramer RoA 50/51 2, p. 98 f.

30) Lundblad Pr 50/51 5, p. 242; cf. Söderberg Pr 50/51 5, p. 246.

governor's offices and county councils will have the same objectives. No difference need thus originate between them. The county governor's office could be supported by the county councils in various ways. What is lacking at present are forms determined by law for consulting the county inhabitants. The county governor could get the necessary information from the local government institutions.³¹⁾

The criticism has been that the county governor would have the county council as a guardian. This naturally depends on the county governor himself.³²⁾ Reference can be made to a Norwegian *amtman* (county governor) who, with reference to the Norwegian reform, remarks: "*Förmanskapen* (the county councils) are possibly intolerable to a weak amtman; however, a competent amtman finds in them his best and safest support."³³⁾ It has actually happened in a certain Swedish county that the County Agricultural Associations have appropriated to themselves such a guardianship. In that case, it must be better to have a guardian elected by the county inhabitants.³⁴⁾

According to one of the allegations in the counter arguments, the county councils would function as "vehicles for spreading and maintaining political unrest throughout the country". The same thing could naturally be asserted against constitutional practice in general. But as this objection can hardly be used as a basis for rejecting constitutionalism as such, it should not be applied to a minor part of the country either. The county councils treat subjects of far less sensitivity than those treated by the national parliament. On the other hand, there is reason to suppose that the extension of the constitutional system to meetings arranged throughout the country at the county level will increase the strength of the constitution construction.³⁵⁾ The industrial spirit that will predominate on the county councils will guarantee order and peace. The negotiations will also be kept within proper limits.³⁶⁾ A greater danger would threaten if the democratic element was allowed to develop in an unorganized manner.³⁷⁾

It has also been maintained that the unity of the state would be exposed to danger because of the division into communes and their associated specialized economic legislation. Such legislation will create prosperity, however, and this will lead in turn to stability.³⁸⁾

5.5.4 Inconvenience and heavy costs

The lack of commune spirit is expressed in, among other things, an unwillingness on the part of the peasants to undertake communal duties without

31) af Ugglas RoA 53/54 2, p. 65 f.; RoA 50/51 5, p. 483 f.; ABEU 56/58, No. 127, p. 50.

32) Ekensteen RoA 50/51 1, p. 179.

33) Björnstjerna RoA 56/58 1, p. 339.

34) v. Hartmansdorff RoA 53/54 9, p. 379.

35) ABEU 56/58, No. 127, p. 50; Bore 13.1.1851; Stolpe Bg 53/54, app., p. 454.

36) af Ugglas RoA 50/51 2, p. 110.

37) Ibid.

38) af Ugglas RoA 50/51 1, p. 169 f.

compensation.³⁹⁾ If the communal tasks are increased, the peasants will be affected particularly severely. “One has to travel considerable distances without compensation to perform one’s duties to society and the commune, and in my opinion one should try to reduce these duties as much as possible so that some time is available for managing one’s own affairs.”⁴⁰⁾ However, if we try to compensate for the loss of time by paying the representatives, the result will be a not inconsiderable expense, which will have to be reimbursed by the people.⁴¹⁾

Refutation from the decentralization school. The introduction of county representation would not bring about any increase in inconvenience of the general public. Indeed it would free the public from duties on the innumerable committees that now cause so much trouble and waste of time.⁴²⁾ Even though the costs would increase, there would be greater control over county affairs.⁴³⁾ If the local government institutions can act to the advantage of the members of the commune and can make a profit for them, then the members of the commune will desire the posts instead of avoiding them.⁴⁴⁾ Nor need the costs of paying the representatives be so great.⁴⁵⁾ There would at the same time be savings because it would not be necessary to pay wages to so many officials.⁴⁶⁾

5.6 The decentralization school in the 1850s

The presentation has been an attempt to reconstruct the decentralization school in the Swedish debate of the 1850s and to discuss the hypothesis that a primary goal for decentralization is to create participation conditions.

The means of decentralization have been presented in the form of an “ideal type”. The reason that the school’s means have not been accounted for in full is that the accumulated texts contain too many propositions, provisory in character, for such a reconstruction to be meaningful. The “ideal type” of the means implies a selection of those features of the decentralization variables that have been specially emphasized in the debate. The following have been involved:

Subterritory	—	historically defined areas
Subsystem	—	self-government at several levels
Subject areas	—	own affairs, power of taxation
Direction	—	weak
Review	—	must be found from the system.

39) ABEU 50/51, No. 72, p. 16 f.; Pehrsson N. Bd 53/54 6, p. 339; Löwenhielm RoA 50/51 1, p. 178; Rehbinder RoA 53/54 9, p. 377 f.; Fröhlich RoA 50/51 1, p. 180; Lundblad Pr 50/51 5, p. 243.

40) Börjesson Bd 53/54 6, p. 345; cf. Jönsson Bd 53/54 6, pp. 336, 340; Gustafsson Bg 50/51 2, p. 617; ABEU 50/51, No. 72, p. 17.

41) Lekberg Bd 56/58 9, pp. 45, 53 f.

42) Tersmeden RoA 56/58 1, p. 153; Traneus Pr 53/54 6, p. 284; af Ugglas RoA 53/54 2, p. 101.

43) Tersmeden RoA 56/58 1, p. 153.

44) af Ugglas RoA 53/54 2, p. 99.

45) Larsson Bd 56/58 9, p. 48.

46) Pehrsson Bd 56/58 9, p. 55.

In brief, the means has been called: "expanded local government institutions". It has been particularly emphasized that it is a matter of a complete communal construction, not "a patching up" of the old.

The material has not allowed us to establish the relations between the individual decentralization variables and the conditions, except on some isolated points. On the other hand, it has been possible to give a relatively detailed description of the relations between the conditions and various values. This latter part provides a good illustration of how a means-end-scheme can actually be created (cf. Fig. 15).

About twenty types of conditions have been sorted by content into a preliminary set of four categories. The education and relation categories have predominated when measured in number of conditions. The proximity category has clearly exceeded the insignificant antibureaucracy category. The presentation of the conditions in these categories has been used as a basis on which to analyse the participation element. The results of this analysis have indicated that the participation conditions (i.e. those that have presumed participation by members of the subsociety in the subsystem's allocation of values) have been clearly dominant, both qualitatively and quantitatively.

The texts contained references to three values: namely, freedom, stability and prosperity. The values were variously related, but no particular tendency could be found. The values are more or less political "clichés" and can thus be said to have great "scope". Most measures undertaken by a political system can be seen as means aimed at achieving any of these values. The conditions, on the other hand, give the impression of being more closely related to the means. It therefore seems probable that the relation between conditions and the means-variable is relatively constant in different situations, whereas the values can change from actor to actor and from situation to situation.

Due to practical problems and the quality of the material, the account of the decentralization school's situation description has had to be reduced to two questions of immediate relevance to the school's recommendations. The first: Do the existing local government institutions function? has been answered with a more or less emphatic no. The second: Is there a sense of public spirit? has revealed a division in the school's opinion. On the other hand, agreement has been unanimous over the possibility of developing a sense of public spirit with the aid of decentralization. It has not, however, been possible to relate the differences stated here to differences in other variables in the analysis.

The counter-arguments that were part of the communal debate were of a quality that did not offer any basis for the construction of a centralization school. But they were important to the decentralization school's arguments in that they steered the debate.

The decentralization model has proved to be highly effective. The various

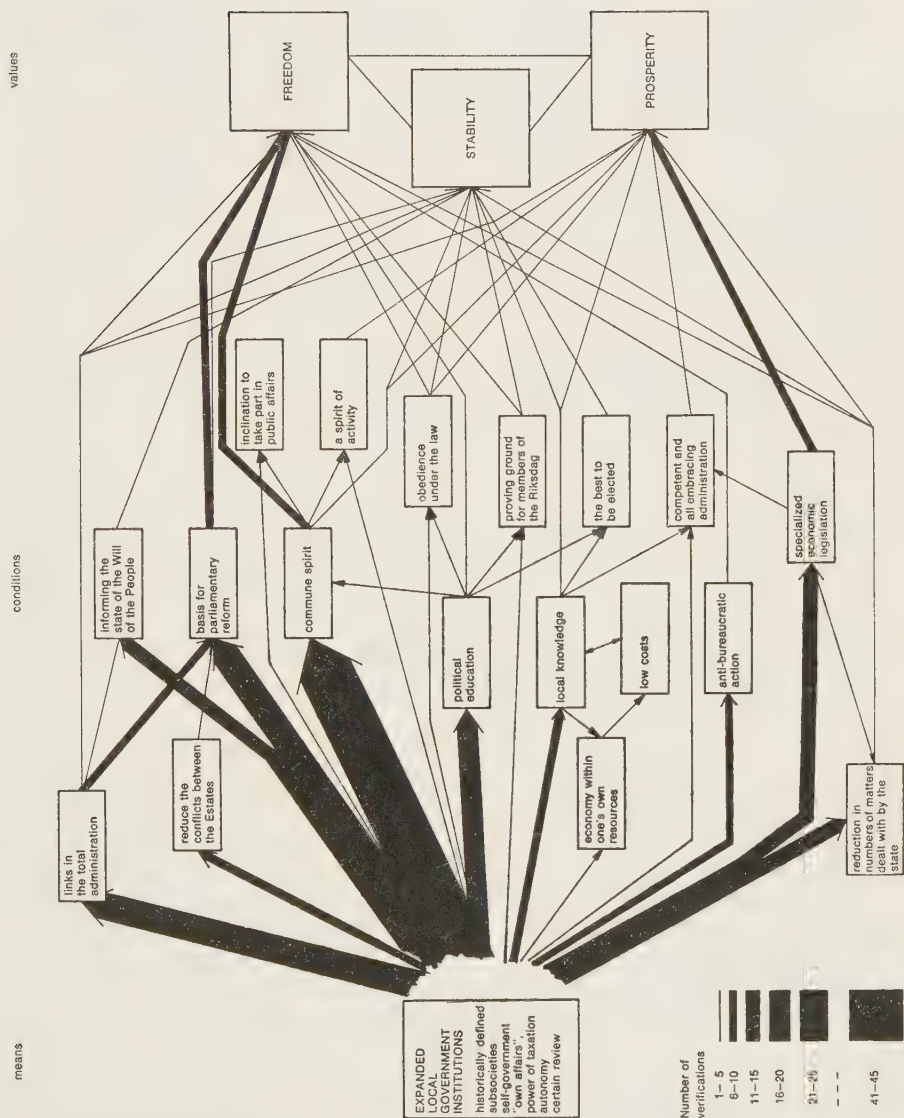


Fig. 15. Means, conditions and values of decentralization

decentralization variables have been easy to identify and to transfer into the terms of the model. The other analysis variables have also been distinguished without much difficulty. The discretionary appraisal over what constitutes a condition or a value has not posed any problems because of the formulation of the texts.

The actors are only interesting in their capacity as text deliverers. An elucidation of the policy level in the communal debate of the 1850s has not been of immediate interest; it would have required a different procedure too. The only assessment of degrees of importance has been in regard to the participation conditions in the text. It is impossible to base any extensive argument on the conclusions about policy situation that might be drawn from the contents of the footnotes.

Chapter 6

Decentralization debate in the 1960s

The Swedish administration in the 1960s was a mixture of centralization and decentralization. On the regional level as well as on the local level, there were decentralized administrations (county councils and local communes) and deconcentrated ones (county governor's offices with local organs, regional and local organizations of central administration authorities). The public sector was of considerable dimensions. At its maximum, it amounted to about 50 per cent of the GNP. The state was responsible for a somewhat larger share than were the communes.

As the texts show, the actors attach great importance to the means of decentralization. They take the virtues of decentralization for granted, and what they recommend amounts simply to different versions of it. They describe institutions embodying the principle of local government as essential to a functioning democracy. When they believe that such self-government is threatened, they react by emphasizing its fundamental importance. The following quotation is a representative expression of their attitude:

This condition is liable to cause alarm among others because the institutions of local government are one of the bases of our current democratic social order. The calm domestic political development that has characterized conditions in Sweden, unlike that of several other countries, may be attributed to the understanding of public and private needs and to the spirit of unity and feeling of common responsibility for the general good that self-government in the communes has fostered among all groups of Swedish people. It is generally agreed that these values must not be destroyed. It is necessary to break down the present negative development and, as soon as possible, to undertake measures for further strengthening local government.¹⁾

No discussion of goals on value level otherwise occurs. Here, we could venture the hypothesis that the actors broadly agree about the values that decentralization aims at. Some "uniting" contributions to the debate argue

1) KU 1962:1, p. 26 f.; Hansson *et al.* (cp) motion AK 1961:860, p. 1; cf. Hamrin klm (fp) AK 1962:8, p. 68; Pettersson *et al.* (cp) res. KU 1962:1, p. 41; Borås Tidning 29.3.1962; Nilsson *et al.* (cp) motion FK 1961:14, p. 2; Svenningsson *et al.* (h) res KU 1962:1, p. 35; Heckscher *et al.* (h) motion AK 1961:859, p. 7.

for this agreement; for instance, when it is said: "cannot we, in any case, agree that all democratic parties will guard these high ideal values".²⁾

The actors also express the same basic appraisal concerning the current situation. It is agreed that a number of communes lack economic prerequisites for adequately performing their functions. It is not until the next stage that school-founding differences occur; namely, the stage of deciding what measures must be undertaken in order to solve the problems.

It can be presumed that the actors will vary the decentralization variables in order to achieve a higher degree of decentralization or at least maintain the present degree. This means (cf. 3.3.3) that they wish to maintain or increase the general influence of subsociety members over the subsystem's allocation of values (*influence*), to maintain or increase the number of important subject areas within the subsystem (*importance*), and to maintain or weaken the steering and review of the subsystem (*autonomy*). The debate is to be concentrated on the problem of this degree of decentralization.

The material of the debate analysed here arises from a policy situation that arose with the publishing of an official report containing a proposal for a new division into communes (SOU 1961: 9). The report, published in February 1961, was circulated for comments and used as the basis for a government proposal at the 1961 Autumn Session of the Riksdag. The treatment of the proposal and of the bills introduced because of it was postponed until the 1962 Spring Session, which passed a resolution about a voluntary merger of communes in February. This reform was then further discussed in the press. The entire policy stage covers a period of somewhat more than one year. It can be compared with the ten-year period analysed for the 1850s.

Parallel with this commune division debate, another commune debate took place. It began in Dagens Nyheter³⁾ in August 1961 and was followed by considerable discussion in the press.⁴⁾ This latter was concerned with the theme "the crisis in communal democracy" and was carried on partly by actors who believed that a crisis existed, and partly by actors who believed that the commune functioned satisfactorily. The proposals recommended for solving the problem usually did not suggest any variation of the decentralization variables. This debate was continued in the debate over the division; there is therefore hardly any point in devoting separate attention to it.

6.1 The structuring of the schools of thought

The analysis is based on two types of material contemporary with the debate

2) Svenningsson (h) FK 1962:8, p. 64; cf. Traan (s) AG 1962:8, p. 129.

3) Dagens Nyheter 3 and 8 Aug. 1961; later, in more detail in Furhoff 1961.

4) Cf., e.g., Aftonbladet 30.12.1961; Dagens Nyheter 9.8.1961, 12.8.1961, 13.8.1961; Göteborgs Handels- och Sjöfartstidning 12.8.1961; Ny Tid 11.8.1961, 30.8.1961, 31.8.1961, 13.10.1961, 14.11.1961; Svenska Dagbladet 14.4.1962, 13.8.1961; Larsson 1961, p. 49 ff.; cf. also Törnquist-Wirsell 1962 *passim*.

over division; namely, the official report and the news press and magazines. The official report devotes 700 pages to the question, the press about 200 articles, and the magazines about 50 articles. The material is thus somewhat smaller than that of the 1850s.

The texts of the 1960s, as distinct from those of the 1850s, permit a division into different schools advocating decentralization. Because they all defend different variants of decentralization, it may perhaps be more adequate to speak of subschools of the decentralization school. Otherwise, the two groups of material resemble each other with regard to the enormous variation in scope between different texts: from short comments to extensive proposals of principle. There are however considerable differences in content. The earlier material contains few prognoses of what relation should subsist between individual means and goals. The debate of the 1960s, on the other hand, emphasizes such prognoses. The material from the 1850s was largely concentrated on discussions of goals at both condition and value levels. The later material shows only one goal-level; namely, conditions.

The latter qualities of the material render possible, or necessitate, different structuring. The material of the 1850s emphasized the condition and value levels, whereas the material of the 1960s emphasized the means and condition levels.

The problem that the actors of decentralization were faced with can be described as follows:

The regression in the thinly populated districts, both from an economic and a population standpoint, creates problems that the communes cannot solve each on its own. It will not do to shut one's eyes to these conditions. If we say no to communal mergers, we must instead point to some other solution.¹⁾

Using the various recommendations for a solution of the problem advanced by the actors, we can divide the material into three different schools of decentralization; the values of the decentralization variables are thus the basis for classification. First, there is *the merger school*, which proposed mergers, formed in a certain way, of the communes at local level; second, there is *the subject area transfer school (the transfer school)* which proposed transferring the subject areas from the local commune to the county council or the state; and third, there is *the localization school*, which proposed an increase in state grants to the communes. The localization school — as its name suggests — also recommended the use of localization measures. This means is not interpreted here as a decentralization variable, but as a form of ecological steering, which can with advantage be discussed in this context (cf. 3.1.1).

1) Dagens Nyheter 21.11.1961; cf. prop 1961:180, p. 42.

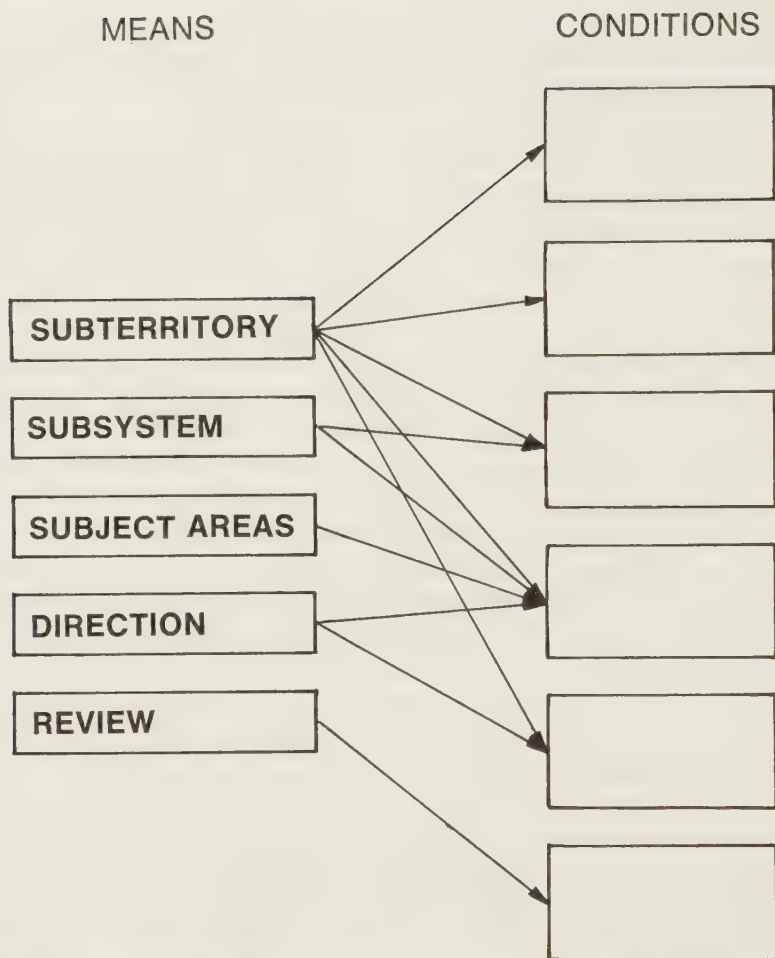


Fig. 16. Analysis possibilities with regard to means and goals (the 1960s)

As distinct from the texts of the 1850s, those of the 1960s contain clear priorities concerning both means and goals. The chapter is arranged on the basis of the three schools of decentralization, which are analysed according to situation and situation prognosis, as well as means and goals. A summary follows, discussing the attitudes of the three schools to the various elements determining the degree of decentralization.

6.2 The merger school

The material for the description of the merger school is, without doubt, the most extensive and developed. The reason is, naturally, that the school “pursued” the matter at policy level.

6.2.1 Situation and situation prognosis

The basis for the merger school's situation description is that some communes, especially the smaller ones, cannot perform their functions economically and in a way that is satisfactory also from other standpoints. Two reasons for this development are emphasized: (1) the structural transformation in the country has been so extensive that many communes do not have the support necessary for them to manage their functions; (2) the general rise in the living standard of Swedish society has created strongly increased demands from the citizens for greater contributions from state and commune, which, as far as the communes are concerned, has meant increased costs for meeting increasingly cost-demanding functions.¹⁾ These two reasons are discussed in more detail below.

(1) *The structural transformation* has meant for the economy that the demand for agricultural labour has decreased at the same time as industry and services have expanded. Because industries were concentrated in large units situated in the densely populated areas, where services also are found, people have moved from the thinly populated districts to the densely populated ones.²⁾ The reduction in population has therefore naturally affected first those communes that have many employed in agriculture and few living in densely populated areas.³⁾ The development, however, varies from one region to another. Whereas the strongly urbanized and industrialized counties have shown a considerable growth in population, the more agriculturally tinged counties have been characterized by stagnation or retrogression.⁴⁾ The school points out that the situation is further aggravated by the younger people, in the main, leaving the thinly populated districts. This has had a particularly unfavourable effect on age distribution. The outflow of people can thus be said to be "considerably more serious than is indicated by the numerical retrogression".⁵⁾

In the depopulated communes, economic conditions have deteriorated considerably. The outflow has caused stagnation with regard to the tax basis, at the same time as the depreciation of money has undermined the grants of equalization of taxation graded on tax basis.⁶⁾ It must, of course, be noted that the tax basis, in accordance with the general trend towards increased prosperity, has become greater in all communes, but it is also obvious that the increase has been smallest in the depopulated ones.⁷⁾ If the economic basis is measured in strength of taxation (=the rate poundage per inhabi-

1) KU 1962:1, p. 26; cf. Skånska Dagbladet 3.2.1961; Landskommunernas Tidskrift 1961, p. 399; Svenska Stadsförbundets Tidskrift 1961, p. 297; Göteborgs Posten 24.11.1961; Ny Dag 23.2.1962.

2) prop 1961:180, p. 40; Johansson (s) FK 1962:8, p. 78.

3) SOU 1961:9, pp. 122 f., 235; Johansson (s) AK 1962:8 p. 50 f.

4) SOU 1961:9, p. 27 ff.

5) prop 1961:180, p. 40; SOU 1961:9, p. 24 ff.

6) KU 1962:1, p. 26.

7) SOU 1961:9, pp. 70, 123.

tant), then the cities (51.46) and boroughs (38.17) are considerably stronger than the rural communities (28.18).⁸⁾

The situation prognoses, sketched by the merger school, emphasize that the indicated development can hardly be prevented. On the contrary, it is to be expected that the difference between the depopulated communes and other communes will increase.⁹⁾ A new trend noted during recent decades is that competition has arisen between the densely populated areas. If this is accentuated, it can be anticipated that the migratory flow will soon affect also the lesser densely populated areas.¹⁰⁾ According to an appraisal of the rate of migration, no less than 80 per cent of Sweden's population will by 1975 be living in densely populated areas, whereas only 20 per cent will live in the actual countryside.¹¹⁾ The same tendency of migration into densely populated areas is found in all the highly industrialized countries. To the extent that a migration has taken place in the opposite direction, this has not been to depopulated areas, but to "recreation areas". It seems hardly probable that the thinly populated districts will regain their lost population.¹²⁾

Concerning the communes, this radical structural change has had consequences that can be summed up as follows:

An unfavourable development regarding the tax basis, together with a population basis that shrinks year by year, must have an obstructing and in some cases a paralyzing effect on communal activity. No matter how efficient communal management is, it cannot stop this development, no matter how long it tries, if the commune's economic resources give no scope for initiative and an active communal policy. Under those circumstances, there is an obvious risk that a commune's standards will lag behind those of others, which in its turn further hastens the commune's decline.¹³⁾

The consequences of the structural change also mean — as pointed out by the merger school — a serious risk of considerably weakening local government in many places.¹⁴⁾

(2) *The rise in standards* is the second feature of development that the merger school uses as basis for describing the situation:

The continued increase in production in industry, thanks to technical progress and structural changes, makes possible rises in standards in various respects. Citizens have enjoyed improved economic conditions and increased leisure, which have created new habits and demands. From this follow greater demands for service, including those services supplied by society.¹⁵⁾

8) SOU 1961:9, p. 43 ff.

9) SOU 1961:9, pp. 122 f., 235; Johansson (s) FK 1962:8, p. 80; AK 1962:8, p. 50 f.

10) prop. 1961:180, p. 40.

11) SOU 1961:9, p. 27.

12) Segerstedt-W. (fp) FK 1962:8, p. 60.

13) SOU 1961:9, p. 123; cf. KU 1962:1, p. 26; Hamrin klm (fp) AK 1962:8, p. 65.

14) KU 1962:1, p. 26; Hamrin klm (fp) AK 1962:8, p. 65.

15) prop. 1961:180, p. 40.

A result of the citizens' increased demands for social services is that the communes have had to take on new functions. These take the form of new subject areas in the specially regulated administration and of an expansion within the framework of the local government. We can point to such things as planning, installations, and housing supply; to the provision of community centres, libraries, public baths, and sports grounds; to the provision of more facilities for vocational training, for education and for rehabilitation; to increased contributions to the elementary school; to improved social care of the aged; and to contributions to an improved environment.¹⁶⁾

All these newly-added functions naturally cost money. The question is therefore whether the communes will find it possible to keep abreast of the development in standards. The effect of the structural transformation often makes this doubtful. There is, chiefly, the risk that the members of the depopulated communes will not be able to share the new benefits.¹⁷⁾ If we compare the conditions found in communes with different taxation strength, we note that the standard in communes with high taxation strength is "not inessentially higher" than in communes with lower taxation strength. Communes with good tax bases can, for one thing, maintain a relatively low level of taxation, and, for another, offer their members a good communal standard.¹⁸⁾

In connexion with situation description and situation prognosis, the merger school expresses a general opinion of the state's and the communes' role: it is that they must prepare a way for continuing progress, at the same time as they must soften the negative effects indicated by the structural transformation for certain places.¹⁹⁾

6.2.2 Establishing precedence among means and goals

The policy line that the merger school claims to represent in the debate has a particularly modest ambition level. What it states as its aim is merely to indicate lines of direction for voluntary co-operation between communes. The intention here is that these lines of direction can guide communes at the possible mergers. The state's contribution is restricted to mediating through the county governor's offices what areas can be considered a suitable foundation for a new commune. Within the framework of these proposed areas, the communes themselves might then examine to the question of a merger. Through this voluntary collaboration, a feeling of affinity is expected to grow between the presumptive partners in a merger — that is the opinion of the merger school.¹⁾

16) prop 1961:180, p. 41; KU 1962:1, p. 26; Hamrin klm (fp) AK 1962:8, p. 65.

17) prop 1961:180, p. 41; Hamrin klm (fp) AK 1962:8, p. 65; KU 1962:1, p. 26; Johansson (s) FK 1962:8, p. 79 f.

18) SOU 1961:9, p. 56.

19) prop 1961:180, p. 40.

1) SOU 1961:9, p. 226 f.; prop 1961:180, pp. 90, 96; Johansson (s) FK 1962:8, p. 76 f.; AK 1962:8, pp. 54 f., 60; KU 1962:1, p. 28 f.; Arbetet 27.10.1961; Aftonbladet 22.2.1962.

The merger school thus recommends the regrouping of communes into larger units. Underlying this recommendation is the idea that improved communications have rendered necessary an amalgamation into larger units. This idea, which is also applicable to, for instance, the European Free Trade Area or the United Nations, is thus formulated by the school: "increased mutual economic dependence — greater demands on effective joint contributions".²⁾

The division reform, as the imagined merger of communes is called, is seen as part of a general decentralization decision, which, moreover, must contain measures to equalize taxation. Apart from that, the reform must include methods of localization.³⁾ Because the localization policy is not counted among the decentralization variables, the merger school's views on the problem will be sketched here in broad terms.

The localization policy carried out so far is described as comparatively passive. It has been directed predominantly to stimulating and advising. Private enterprises have themselves made the localization decisions. They have sought out communes with available labour, where the employees have been offered benefits in the form of various kinds of social service, such as education for the children, social care, and nursing care services. At present, as pointed out by the school, however, they face a situation that demands a more active localization policy. This policy would guarantee that economic and cultural points of support would be obtained throughout the country. This policy could be so formulated that the state would take responsibility for certain costs in order to encourage a localization that is unfavourable from the standpoint of the entrepreneur.⁴⁾ Consideration must be given to the basic difficulty created by the tendency towards concentration. The localization decisions taken by the enterprises are determined by their desire to rationalize their undertakings and make them more efficient, and this desire must be encouraged so that the enterprises are able to cope with international competition.⁵⁾

It is hardly possible to correct all anomalies with localization policy only, and it cannot function as an alternative to a division reform. On the other hand, it can function as a supplement to such a reform if communes are being created that seem attractive objects of localization to the enterprisers.⁶⁾ The decentralization measures should be taxation equalization and commune merger. In the choice between the two subvariables, the merger school prefers first to create a rational administrative organization through a division reform. Thereafter, the time arrives for remaining equalization matters to be dealt with. The possible variations that actually exist — for instance, transfer of subject areas from the commune to the state or the county councils — cannot

2) Aftonbladet 5.2.1961; cf. Göteborgs Posten 24.11.1961; Vestmanlands Läns Tidning 22.2.1962.

3) Johansson (s) FK 1962:8, p. 86; AK 1962:8, p. 57.

4) Johansson (s) AK 1962:8, p. 51 f.; FK 1962:8, p. 82.

5) Johansson (s) AK 1962:8, p. 61.

6) prop 1961:180, p. 46 f.

produce effects that would enable one to dispense with a division reform.⁷⁾ As far as subject areas are concerned, it is pointed out that: "... already the functions that must unquestionably belong to the local commune if, in the main, we want to have local self-government necessitate in the present situation a review of the communal division."⁸⁾ The results that might be obtained by equalizing taxes and transferring subject areas perhaps would be insufficient to solve the difficulties that many less financially sound communes find themselves in.⁹⁾

What objectives does the merger school expect to achieve by its decentralization activities? In general, it associates itself with the fundamental objectives for decentralization, which most actors who take part in the debate express support for. It refers to the idea that the decentralized allocation of values is a decisive force for political democracy and development in Swedish society.¹⁰⁾ In the debate in question, objectives are naturally primarily indicated for the recommended commune merger. It is throughout a matter of goals on condition level. As an example can be mentioned a few central objectives, according to which, commune mergers "provide personnel and economic and organizatory resources in general for the communes, the resources necessary to supply a good communal service; the commune mergers are based on common interests of the members of the commune and can be expected to attain permanency".¹¹⁾ The former condition "to supply a good communal service" is particularly emphasized by the school; what is required "is nothing other than an attempt to give guarantees to the people in our country, independent of where they live, for a fairly similar social service".¹²⁾

The supporters of the merger school are fully conscious that commune mergers can create problems for communal democracy. Seen from the perspective of the degree of decentralization, it is necessary not to counteract the increase in the importance component that the mergers' reinforcement of resources is thought to suggest, with a decrease in the influence for the member of the commune in general. However, the risk of reduced influence is judged to be less imminent.¹³⁾ In any event, the increase in importance means more than the reduction in influence for the total degree of decentralization. A certain level of service is thought to be a prerequisite for local self-government to be of interest. There are also a few contributions that clearly give priority to the importance component. The idea here is that the people in the commune naturally value being allowed to elect representatives every fourth year and the fact that some of them may sit in the assembly of

7) prop 1961:180, p. 44.

8) prop 1961:180, p. 46.

9) KU 1962:1, p. 27.

10) Cf. Wieslander 1964, pp. 41 f., 69, 98.

11) prop 1961:180, p. 90 f.

12) Johansson (s) FK 1962:8, p. 81; cf. Tiden 1962, p. 252.

13) prop 1961:180, pp. 47 f.; Ny Dag 4.2.1961; Aftonbladet 29.11.1961.

representatives and on boards, “but they set a greater value on the material content that can be supplied by better equipped communes”. He who is unable to get his livelihood in a commune must move away. The younger people, especially, put a high value on good economic and social standards.¹⁴⁾

6.2.3 Subterritory — means and goals

The subterritory variable naturally is fundamental to the merger school and occupies a considerable part of its argumentation. Because other schools start counter argumentation at this variable, it can be considered to be the starting point and the basis for the entire debate. Its crucial importance is good reason for a more detailed analysis of the merger school’s course of action concerning the subterritory variable.

According to the view of the merger school, there are administrative and spontaneous areas. The administrative area has its boundaries legally regulated in the terrain. The spontaneous areas, which include the free economic and social relations between the people, have very diffuse boundaries. A basic thought in the merger school’s argumentation is to try to get agreement between administrative and spontaneous areas.¹⁾ The subterritory variable can here be used for mergers of communes with consideration given to the structural conditions in the new area.

The new communes — the communal blocks — consist of territories that are closely related, both economically and geographically. This aspect of the division reform is particularly emphasized by the merger school: “it is this that is the most essential in the proposal presented here”.²⁾ The new areas are built up around centres that are natural spontaneous service centres for the surrounding districts.³⁾ It is on this point, among others, that the proposed reform differs from the commune mergers of 1952. Then, it was, in the main, necessary to create financially sound units by merger of rural communities.⁴⁾ Now, when we wish to merge rural and town areas, we describe it as an attempt to produce a “solidarization” between rural district and town.⁵⁾

The size of the subterritory in itself is naturally of subordinate importance. Its size is of interest with regard to the number of inhabitants. The economic-geographical main principle, however, is decisive. In any case, it is difficult to suggest both a suitable size and the size necessary for the communes to be able to perform their functions adequately. Here, the allocation of values makes different demands on different subject areas. Actually, not all demands refer solely to the population basis.⁶⁾ Despite everything, some estimate was

14) Jonsson (s) FK 1962:8, p. 90.

1) SOU 1961:9, p. 134 ff.

2) Johansson (s) AK 1962:8, p. 47; cf. prop 1961:180, p. 90.

3) SOU 1961:9, p. 138; KU 1962:1, p. 29; Arbetet 27.10.1961.

4) prop 1961:180, p. 90.

5) Johansson (s) AK 1962:8, p. 56; cf. Tobé (fp) AK 1962:8, p. 123.

6) SOU 1961:9, p. 129 f.; cf. prop 1961:180, pp. 1, 92.

aimed at; 8000 inhabitants is the figure chosen for 1975.⁷⁾ This figure should be the minimum unless especially strong reasons exist for varying it.⁸⁾ The opinion of the merger school is that there is a relation between the size of an area and its economic-geographical composition. The larger the areas created, the bigger the prerequisites necessary for obtaining the desired economic-geographical composition of the area.⁹⁾

The current administrative boundaries naturally present a difficulty. However, no regard is paid to these boundaries except where the choice lies between equivalent alternatives. There can then be reason to link up with county or other division boundary.¹⁰⁾ Actually, we can very well imagine the mergers of communes from different counties or — if it agrees with the wishes of the population — the division of old communes.¹¹⁾ A general rule, however, is that the division should not be done in such a way that the new boundaries cut an already existing or a planned settlement.¹²⁾

These principles for the division cannot be applied consistently. First, there are the three largest cities — Stockholm, Gothenburg, and Malmö — whose circumstances deviate from those of other communes to such an extent that the proposed principles are not in the main applicable. Second, we have certain large regional centres with extremely vast surrounding country. In some of these, a consistent application of the economic-geographical principle would result in communes that were too big. In these cases, it might be fitting to create still another commune around another densely populated area in the region, although such an arrangement does not altogether correspond to the demands made.¹³⁾ In the Norrland Counties, we obviously cannot keep up the requirements of a comprehensive economic-geographical structure and at the same time maintain the objectives of common interests in the commune.¹⁴⁾

Goals for the subterritory variable. Primarily, the merger school wishes to achieve the condition BETTER ECONOMIC BASIS for communal activities. The subterritory variable is described by the value *larger areas — connected both economically and geographically*. Sometimes, the means as a whole is said to lead to the goals; sometimes, either of the components is said to lead to certain goals. The relation between situation means and goals is emphasized for the subterritory variable with unusual clarity:

If half of the country's communes have a strongly negative population curve and are already now too small, whereas at the same time, the social development

7) prop 1961:180, pp. 1, 92; SOU 1961:9, p. 176.

8) prop 1961:180, p. 94.

9) Johansson (s) AK 1962:8, p. 61.

10) prop 1961:180, p. 94 f.

11) Johansson (s) FK 1962:8, p. 81; prop 1961:180, p. 94 ff.; KU 1962:1, p. 29.

12) prop 1961:180, p. 93.

13) prop 1961:180, p. 93; cf. KU 1962:1, p. 29.

14) KU 1962:1, p. 29; prop 1961:180, p. 94; Hamrin klm *et al.* (fp) motion AK 1961:858, p. 4.

demands larger communal units, is this not then enough justification for a merger or a change in division?¹⁵⁾

The condition BETTER ECONOMIC BASIS is sometimes laid down as a goal on the first level through which a number of other conditions will be achieved. Sometimes, the means variables are directly related to these other conditions. There are therefore conditions for which BETTER ECONOMIC BASIS is never an intermediate goal. There is probably no greater reason for attempting to elucidate the background to the differences on these points. They can often be attributed to incompletenesses in the argumentation of the debaters.

This section begins with a description of the goals that a BETTER ECONOMIC BASIS leads to. Thereafter, a number of goals are described for which no intermediate conditions are given.

RATIONAL HANDLING OF DECENTRALIZED SUBJECT AREAS. In many of the small communes, the communal activity in several subject areas is carried on in a way that does not correspond to justifiable demands for efficiency.¹⁶⁾ If we make use of the option of taking away from the communes particularly burdensome subject areas, we run the risk of failing to achieve other important decentralization goals. The argumentation emphasizes the relation between the territory variable and the subject area variable. Thus the new school requires a population basis of 7500—8500 people in order to function efficiently. The increasingly complicated social welfare demands a special staff for solving the tasks in the subject area. For it to be rational to employ such staff, a population basis of 5000—6000 is necessary. There are several subject areas with similar difficulties. The merger school, however, finds it hard to determine a minimum necessary population basis. None the less, there is no doubt that several communes, because of insufficient population basis, are unsuitable for subject areas, which must be attributed a considerable importance for local government.¹⁷⁾

COMPETITION ASPECTS IN REFERENCE TO LOCALIZATION. If the commune is to be able to compete for industrial enterprises, it must be in a position to provide for these enterprises and their employees a communal service equal to that of other communes. If communes merge together into financially sound units, a basis is obtained for such a service. When the commune has then attracted a number of enterprises, these will guarantee that the economic basis of the commune is adequate.¹⁸⁾

The struggle for the localization objects requires more concretely that the commune creates a large centre. It must have good communications and

15) Wiklund (s) AK 1962:8, p. 100; cf. prop 1961:180, p. 41; Aftonbladet 29.11.1961; Ny Dag 4.2.1961.
16) SOU 1961:9, p. 122 ff.; Aftonbladet 5.2.1961.

17) SOU 1961:9, p. 125 ff.

18) Johansson (s) FK 1962:8, p. 82; cf. Jonsson FK 1962:8, p. 90 f.; Pettersson (s) AK 1962:8, p. 87 f.; Nilsson (s) AK 1962:8, p. 117; Aftonbladet 27.2.1962.

provide a good service, and arrangements for pleasure and entertainment. It should in addition be well equipped to meet the requirements that can be expected from the new members of the commune.¹⁹⁾ The conditions for finding a rallying point for localizing trade increase with the size of the communal area.²⁰⁾

STOP THE MIGRATION. If we are successful in getting a closer correspondence between the administrative communal division and the economic-geographical areas, perhaps a greater part of the migration can be captured within the new communal border.²¹⁾ For certain parts of the country, the migration has gone so far, according to the merger school, that there is risk of mismanagement of the country's resources. This perhaps mainly refers to agriculture and forestry. If we wish to retain a few people who can manage these jobs, we must first be able to offer conditions that are fairly similar to those valid for others in the society.²²⁾ This service requirement concerns not least young people. If we wish them to remain in the rural areas, we must be in a position to offer a good communal standard and satisfactory wages.²³⁾ Those who live in the rural districts have the same demands for service as have other citizens. If the commune cannot provide that service, they move out.²⁴⁾

Here too are appraisals of the relation between the objectives and the size of the territory. The communal blocks are so widespread that they can form a basis for a differentiated economy, which in turn forms the basis of a more stable development of population.²⁵⁾

EQUAL SERVICE IRRESPECTIVE OF RESIDENTIAL AREA. The section on the goal priorities pointed out this condition as the objective decisive for the merger school. Through the association with the economic-geographically connected areas, there would be some guarantees that the new commune would obtain the population and economic basis necessary for offering "the citizens in various parts of Sweden a fairly similar service".²⁶⁾

STRENGTHENED SELF-GOVERNMENT. The merger school denies the truth of the statement that local government ceases to exist at the moment that a small unit is added to a large one. On the contrary, when bigger units are created, these can fulfil their functions efficiently. Thus local government is maintained and strengthened. In this sense, the bigger and more financially sound the commune, the better the conditions for self-government.²⁷⁾

19) Jonsson (s) FK 1962:8, p. 90; Johansson (s) AK 1962:8, p. 62 f.; Landskommunernas Tidskrift 1961, p. 402.

20) Johansson (s) AK 1962:8, p. 61.

21) Wiklund (s) AK 1962:8, p. 100; cf. Skånska Dagbladet 23.11.1961 and 23.2.1962.

22) Johansson (s) AK 1962:8, p. 52; cf. Skånska Dagbladet 3.2.1961.

23) Jonsson (s) FK 1962:8, p. 91.

24) Skånska Dagbladet 23.11.1961.

25) prop 1961:180, p. 91.

26) Johansson (s) AK 1962:8, p. 56; FK 1962:8, p. 83; prop 1961:180, p. 48.

27) prop 1961:180, p. 47 f.; cf. Johansson (s) AK 1962:8, p. 55.

None the less, in reality, economic and administrative serviceableness is a necessary condition for the functioning of democracy. If a commune is so small that it cannot fulfil the demands of the citizens, democracy cannot function satisfactorily, no matter how interested the citizens are.²⁸⁾

The merger school presents attempts to maintain a balance between the influence component and the importance component in the degree of decentralization. According to these, communal democracy is not merely a question of whether the members of the commune will find it possible to express their opinions, but also whether they will have the resources to carry out their intentions.²⁹⁾ The communal mergers can thus be said to be a way of also extending communal democracy.³⁰⁾

A frequently discussed problem is whether *the number* of the commune members affects the degree to which citizens in general are able to exert influence, i.e. do the citizen's capacity for insight and participation decrease with the size of the commune? The merger school says "no". If the authorities of the commune are really interested in stimulating insight and engagement, they can do so more easily in a large commune than in a small one, because the large commune has more important problems to engage the interest of the citizen and better resources to provide information about its activities.¹⁾

A result of the mergers is an increase in the civil service of the self-government. However, the merger school does not interpret this as a threat against democracy. Because the large communes have resources for employing staff, the representatives can concentrate on drawing up lines of direction and on debates over principles and do not have to lose themselves in details.²⁾ It is hardly any loss to democracy that employees take over the office routine and that representatives "are relieved of the writing of protocols and trying to deal amateurishly with book-keeping problems and much other work of a similar nature". The decision making by the representatives is facilitated in the large communes by an efficiently arranged administration, where the staff is responsible for procuring bases for the decisions.³⁾ Another effect of a functioning civil service administration is that it makes it easier to recruit representatives because they will be able to avoid a number of practical duties.⁴⁾

When the number of communes decreases, the number of representatives will also decrease. This fact can hardly be used against a division reform: in that event, we would "see the communal organs as an end in themselves, and the requirements of the inhabitants for service as secondary".⁵⁾ In the

28) Aftonbladet 29.11.1961; cf. Aftonbladet 5.2.1961.

29) Hagberg *et al.* (k) motion AK 1962:299, p. 2; cf. note 27.

30) Holmberg (k) AK 1962:8, p. 102.

1) Aftonbladet 14.4.1962.

2) Wiklund (s) AK 1962:8, p. 100; Svenska Stadsförbundets Tidskrift 1961, p. 501 ff.; Landskommunernas Tidskrift 1961, p. 346.

3) Andersson (s) AK 1962:8, p. 35; cf. Wedén (fp) AK 1962:8, p. 110; Landskommunernas Tidskrift 1961, p. 345.

4) SOU 1961:9, p. 133.

5) Hamrin klm (fp) motion AK 1961:858, p. 3.

large commune, every single task becomes more important than it is in the small commune. More people are able to take part in deciding *important* matters.⁶⁾

The subterritory variable can also be used to arrange co-operation between the communes instead of mergers. A result of such co-operation can be that the communes renounce their right of self-determination. In the subject areas where co-operation is established, expenses are no longer subjected to normal budgetary control, and soon we reach a situation where the local government has changed its original nature.⁷⁾ Another effect obtained from merger, but not from co-operation, is a thinning out of the communal representation. For the remainder, this results in an increase in quality to the benefit of the commune.⁸⁾ In conclusion, the school asserts: "... local government has everything to gain and little to lose in having serviceable communal units that are able to dictate the terms for living their own lives within the framework of law and order."⁹⁾

PERMANENT REFORM. The new communal division should be carried out in such a way that it can be expected to last for a long time.¹⁰⁾ This is best achieved by connecting the new commune to the expanding centres towards which migration takes place. Although the migration continues, it will not influence the functioning possibilities of the new commune.¹¹⁾

Apart from the above-related goals, which thus presumed the intermediate condition **BETTER ECONOMIC BASIS**, the merger school presents a number of conditions that do not presume any intermediate goal. This refers to **SUITABLE UNITS FOR COMMUNITY PLANNING** and **FEELING OF AFFINITY**.

SUITABLE UNITS FOR COMMUNITY PLANNING. The merger school also has the end that the communes shall be of such size and delimitation as to be suitable units from the standpoint of community planning.¹²⁾ Both components in the involved value of the subterritory variable contribute to achieving this condition; that is, the extended area¹³⁾ and the economic-geographical structure in the new area.¹⁴⁾

The situation variables that mainly accentuate the need for community planning are the increase in communal expenditure and the improvement in communications. The result of the latter is that the geographical area wherein people live has become considerably larger. It is possible to reside in one

6) Wiklund (s) AK 1962:8, p. 100; Landskommunernas Tidskrift 1961, p. 400.

7) SOU 1961:9, p. 131.

8) Trana (s) AK 1962:8, p. 129 f.

9) Ny Tid 3.2.1961.

10) prop 1961:180, pp. 90 f., 40.

11) Ny Tid 3.2.1961.

12) prop 1961:180, p. 44 f.; KU 1962:1, p. 26; SOU 1961:9, p. 130.

13) Pettersson (s) AK 1962:8, p. 88.

14) SOU 1961:9, p. 236; prop 1961-180, p. 42.

commune, work in another, and shop and find recreation in a third. Because economic-geographical regions are distributed over several communes, the risk is that the idea of planning is lost and that the communes will lag behind in development.¹⁵⁾

When there is a choice between communal co-operation and merger of communes, the merger school is of the opinion that precisely the planning aspect must be decisive. During a merger, the commune authorities have a comprehensive view of the decentralized allocation of values; therefore an appraisal of the entire communal policy can be made. With co-operation, it is also a problem to co-ordinate the subject areas in which the communes co-operate with their other subject areas.¹⁶⁾

FEELING OF AFFINITY. According to the merger school, economic-geographically connected areas around a centre are excellent bases for contacts and for creating a feeling of affinity between the members of the commune. The commune is largely based on this feeling of affinity.¹⁷⁾ However, the negative effects on the feeling of affinity that too large communes can create must also be taken into account. There must be a natural community of interests between the members of the commune. The circumstances that already now bind people together in the economic-geographically connected regions must form a good basis for a future communal interest.¹⁸⁾ Those in the surrounding communes feel affinity with those in the agglomeration. Because the former often work in the agglomeration, living quarters and working place will be combined in the same commune at a communal merger.¹⁹⁾

6.2.4 Subsystem — means and goals

The subsystem variable is of less interest for the merger school in that it does not discuss any changes, except on one point; namely, the introduction of communal subcouncils. Here there are different ideas in the school, though they frequently discuss how the subsystem will be influenced by a communal merger. To some extent, this can be explained by the fact that the other schools largely concentrate their contra-argumentation on appraising the effects of the mergers on the communal democracy. Here, the merger debate and the earlier-mentioned debate about the crisis in the communal democracy confront.

In the main, there were three different attitudes to the introduction of communal subcouncils. The first wishes to give the communal subcouncils a relatively extensive competence. They shall have the right of initiative in

15) *ibid.*

16) prop 1961:180, pp. 43, 90.

17) Johansson (s) AK 1962:8, p. 47; FK 1962:8, p. 80; prop 1961:180, p. 91.

18) KU 1962:1, p. 28 f.

19) Andersson (s) AK 1962:8, p. 35.

the matter of representatives, be institutions of transmission in matters concerning the area, and be supervisors of the execution of communal decisions. If the communal subcouncils are to have any practical importance, they must — according to this faction — have the right of decision and their own resources.¹⁾ The second faction thinks that the communal subcouncils should not have any right of decision, but none the less should offer the members of the commune the possibility to participate.²⁾ The third attitude is negative: communal subcouncils are unsuitable because they would preserve the old communal borders.³⁾ The most important questions, none the less, concern all members of the commune. Unless they are dealt with by the central organs of the community, there is a risk of inefficiency and of lack of uniformity in the communal administration.⁴⁾

Goals for the subsystem variable. The introduction of communal subcouncils is the only recommendation concerning the subsystem variable given by the merger school. The faction in the school that is positive to these councils generally advances participation conditions as objectives. They wish to strengthen the communal democracy or, as the wish is more fully formulated, “to support, develop, and guard local government and communal democracy”.⁵⁾ Local government has not only as its goal a certain independence in relation to the state, but it will also provide the citizens with the possibility of participating in communal affairs that directly concern them.⁶⁾ It is therefore primarily a question of offering, through communal subcouncils, more people the possibility of taking part in communal work.⁷⁾

The discussion about the subsystem variable also contains a fundamental argument about the ends of the participation in general. The measures recommended by the merger school for increasing participation concern, in the main, those matters that the authorities of the commune or the commune's party organizations and press should deal with. Thus, no variation of the subsystem variable is proposed. The political parties and the study organizations can stimulate an increased communal interest⁸⁾, the press should establish firmer contacts with the communal administration⁹⁾, and representatives can meet citizens who are affected by certain matters and so on.¹⁰⁾ On the whole, it is good for communal democracy that the debate is intensified.¹¹⁾

Communal democracy should mean that the citizens have a feeling of joint

1) Hagberg *et al.* (k) motion AK 1962:299, p. 3 f.

2) Hamrin klm (fp) motion AK 1961:858, p. 14; Expressen 22.2.1962.

3) Nilsson (s) AK 1962:8, p. 116; Persson 1961, p. 32.

4) Persson 1961, p. 32.

5) Lager (k) FK 1962:8, p. 92; Hagberg *et al.* (k) motion AK 1962:299, p. 3.

6) *ibid.*

7) Ny Dag 4.2.1961.

8) Nilsson (s) AK 1962:8, p. 116; cf. KU 1962:1, p. 31; prop 1961:180, p. 47 f.

9) prop 1961:180, p. 48; Hamrin klm (fp) motion AK 1961:858, p. 3; Aftonbladet 14.4.1962; Landskommunernas Tidskrift 1961, p. 346.

10) prop 1961:180, p. 48.

11) Hamrin klm (fp) AK 1962:8, p. 70; Adamsson (s) AK 1962:8, p. 120 f.; Alemyr (s) AK 1962:8, p. 133 f.

responsibility for and also an influence on communal activities.¹²⁾ In this way, local government fulfils an educational function, which is an indispensable feature of democracy.¹³⁾ In the large commune, there are several qualified duties to "train" oneself on. Thus the representatives obtain a comprehensive knowledge which can gradually benefit national politics. The commune can be said to function as "an elementary school of democracy".¹⁴⁾

6.2.5 Subject areas — means and goals

The subject area variable attracts less interest from the merger school. Some changes were prepared. Thus the police organization should be transferred to the state; the same thing could be tried for other subject areas. This hardly implies any decisive significance for the relation between subject areas and financial strength. "Already the duties that inevitably must belong to the local commune — if we are to have local government — necessitate in the present situation a supervision of the communal division."¹⁾ The only new item concerning decentralization is the transfer of local community planning to the local communes.²⁾ The value of decentralizing the power to tax is particularly emphasized:

This is thus the fundamental basis on which the local government rests; at the very moment that this relation is abolished, the basis of the local government is also abolished.³⁾

Goals for the subject area variable. The distribution of subject areas is justified by considerations of general efficiency. The organization that has the best prerequisites for dealing with a matter "with regard to the community's service, to the people, and to conditions in general", should also be given the necessary authority.⁴⁾ The subject areas are also interpreted as an important component in the degree of decentralization. Subject areas should not be transferred to state or county councils in such a way that the basis for the local government is jeopardized.⁵⁾ If cost-demanding subject areas — for instance, the educational system — are transferred from the jurisdiction of the commune, local government is correspondingly reduced.⁶⁾

The closeness to the citizens is a condition that the merger school lays down as a goal for decentralizing subject areas to the local commune. Expressed somewhat differently: those subject areas that directly influence environment and social conditions in one's own region must be decentra-

12) Adamsson (s) AK 1962:8, p. 121.

13) Stockholmstidningen 9.5.1961.

14) Aftonbladet 14.4.1962.

1) prop 1961:180, p. 46.

2) prop 1961:180, p. 42.

3) Johansson (s) FK 1962:8, p. 78.

4) KU 1962:1, p. 27; Johansson (s) AK 1962:8, p. 48; prop 1961:180, p. 44 f.

5) Johansson (s) AK 1962:8, p. 48 ff.

6) Wiklund (s) AK 1962:8, p. 101; Skånska Dagbladet 23.11.1961.

lized. Elementary education is quoted as an example of such an environmental-creating subject area.⁷⁾

A reduction in the number of local communal subject areas with the sole object of preventing communal mergers can hardly be in the interest of the communes. The right to maintain the present communal borders cannot, in itself, be of greater value than the possibility for the commune of designing by self-government its own subcommunity. "However, it is important that the resources of the communes, from the aspect of population and economy, are sufficient to form bases for extended rights of self-determination."⁸⁾

6.2.6 Direction and review — means and goals

The direction and review variables attract only slight interest from the merger school. The review is only mentioned in passing, and as far as direction is concerned, they concentrate on financial-steering. The division reform is not expected to solve all problems regarding irregularities in the tax basis of the communes. Even after the new division, there must be a certain financial-steering.¹⁾ However, this must not mean that one must subsidize on organization that from various points of view is non-rational. Moreover, the school has a certain dislike of state direction and review of communal activities: "In principle, it is unsatisfactory to make the communes increasingly dependent on state grants and correspondingly subject them to state control."²⁾

Financial-steering is aimed at tax equalization. It is explicitly stated that this measure is to be understood as supplementing the new communal division. First, the communes are allowed to arrange an efficient administration organization by means of mergers. Thereafter, remaining equalization matters that can be solved through financial-steering are tested.³⁾

Goals for the direction variable. Here, the school has the same basic goals as it had for the subterritory variable to "give guarantees to the people in our country of a fairly similar communal service irrespective of where they live".⁴⁾ At the same time, regard should be paid to the communes' autonomy in relation to the state by taking into account that the communes' right of self-determination is not unnecessarily restricted through directives connected with the state contributions.⁵⁾ The autonomy component in the degree of decentralization can thus be said by the school to have great importance, as is shown, for instance, in the following quotation:

7) prop 1961:180, p. 44 ff.; cf. Andersson (s) AK 1962:8, p. 30 f.; Landskommunernas Tidskrift 1961, p. 400.

8) Landskommunernas Tidskrift 1961, p. 400.

1) Jonsson (s) FK 1962:8, p. 91; cf. prop 1961:180, p. 44.

2) prop 1961:180, p. 44; cf. Ekström (s) AK 1962:8, p. 74 f.

3) Cf. note 1.

4) Johansson (s) FK 1962:8, p. 81.

5) prop 1961:180, p. 44; Hamrin *et al.* (fp) motion AK 1961:858, p. 5.

A local government whose only function lies in paying bills is not even a government that we have cause to support. The communes shall not be ends in themselves; they shall function in such a way that they can manage the duties they have or are given.⁶⁾

6.3 The transfer school

The material of the transfer school is considerably less than that of the merger school. Moreover, it is to a large extent marked by polemics against the argumentation of the merger school.

6.3.1 Situation and situation prognosis

The transfer school seems to agree with the situation description of the merger school. It is not so easy to support this statement with the aid of extracts from the texts. However, we could venture to interpret the lack of polemics against the situation description of the merger school as a support. Sometimes, situation variables are mentioned, e.g. "the population development, the communal economy, the size of the administration duties, and the scope of the intercommunal work" in a way that obviously relates to the merger school.¹⁾ It is emphasized that the communes are allotted subject areas or new duties in those areas and that further transfers are to be expected here. The structural transformation has, at the same time, meant that great differences have arisen between the communes with regard to population basis and economic basis.²⁾

The situation prognoses of the merger school are sometimes explicitly questioned. It is then said that the development cannot with certainty be predicted. It is conceivable that, for instance, the migration from the thinly-populated areas will be halted by such things as improved communications; the increased use of cars and motor vehicles must be taken into account. It is therefore possible that gradually, as in the U.S.A., there will be migration from the urbanized areas to the thinly-populated areas.³⁾

6.3.2 Establishing precedence among means and goals

The transfer school does not regard the present communal division as permanent. It is impossible to close one's eyes to development; a review of the communal borders may in many cases be necessary.⁴⁾ This is because many

6) Tobé (fp) AK 1962:8, p. 123.

1) Hagberg (h) FK 1962:8, p. 46; cf. Heckscher *et al.* (h) motion AK 1961:859, p. 10.

2) Svenningsson *et al.* (h) reservation KU 1962:1, p. 34 f.; cf. Dagens Nyheter 21.11.1961.

3) Heckscher *et al.* (h) motion AK 1961:859, p. 10; Bengtsson (cp) FK 1962:8, p. 45.

4) Hagberg (h) FK 1962:8, p. 46; Kaijser (h) FK 1962:8, p. 94; Heckscher (h) AK 1962:8, p. 39; Nilsson *et al.* (cp) motion FK 1961:14, p. 4; Bengtsson (cp) FK 1962:8, pp. 43, 84; Borås Tidning 6.3.1962.

communes lack an economic basis sufficient to allow them to perform their functions adequately. Here, financial strength is linked to subject areas in such a way that both can be varied:

Financial strength cannot be referred to in a vacuum — so to speak. If the communes are to have bigger functions, greater demands are laid on their financial strength; if certain functions are transferred from the communes, less demands are made on their financial strength.⁵⁾

Before we begin to discuss a new communal division, we must clarify the functions that are to be apportioned to state, county council, and local commune. Not until then can it be determined how the costs concerning the authoritative allocation of values are to be distributed.⁶⁾

As basic objective for decentralization, the transfer school indicates the importance of decentralization for the entire Swedish constitution: "The Swedish representative government is fundamentally based on the principles of the local self-government."⁷⁾ Thus primarily the conditions for participation are maintained. No matter what attempts to resolve the communal issue are made, the decisive objectives must be to "guarantee the widest possible civic influence on solving social problems and also insight into social machinery."⁸⁾ Because of this, efforts must be made "to maintain local government in the sense of real civic influence."⁹⁾ Local self-government means that the citizens have direct influence on the allocation of values. Different communes can solve their problems differently according to what scope exists for local variations.¹⁰⁾

6.3.3 Subterritory — means and goals

The subterritory variable. It is pointed out that development can enforce communal mergers. However, the transfer school will not recommend a general division reform. It points to the many depopulation communes where the population decreases yearly and where the tax basis recedes. There, sooner or later, the communes must merge into larger units.^{10a)} There are reasons for being particularly careful when big rural districts combine with large or medium-sized towns. "The result is in many respects unfortunate for the smaller communes which will, so to speak, drown in the larger unit."¹¹⁾

5) Heckscher (h) AK 1962:8, p. 37.

6) Hagberg (h) FK 1962:8, p. 48; Virgin (h) FK 1962:8, p. 75; Nyberg *et al* (fp) motion AK 1961:854, p. 9; Bengtsson (cp) FK 1962:8, p. 43 f.; Hamrin Jönk. (fp) AK 1962:8, p. 29 f.

7) Borås Tidning 29.3.1962.

8) Hamrin Jönk. (fp) AK 1962:8, p. 29; Nilsson *et al.* (cp) motion FK 1961:14, pp. 2, 4 f.; Heckscher (h) AK 1962:8, p. 39; Svenningsson *et al.* (h) reservation KU 1962:1, p. 35.

9) Heckscher (h) AK 1962:8, p. 39.

10) Heckscher (h) AK 1962:8, p. 37.

10a) Svenningsson (h) FK 1962:8, p. 38 f.

11) Hedin (h) AK 1962:8, p. 125; cf. Heckscher *et al.* (h) motion AK 1961:859, p. 10 f.; Nilsson *et al.* (cp) motion FK 1961:14, p. 3 f.; Nilsson (h) AK 1962:8, p. 80.

Goals for the subterritory variable. The discussion about goals concerning the subterritory variable is mainly involved in the transfer school's argumentation against larger communal units. What the school says it chiefly fears is that the conditions for participation will not be achieved. Even if it is thought that local government is maintained just as well in a small as in a large commune¹²⁾, the predominant idea seems to be that the small communes are best suited for participation.¹³⁾ This is based on the opinion that the feeling of affinity between the members of the commune plays a decisive role in communal democracy. A local government without affinity between the members of the commune is hardly meaningful, and the larger the communes, the more difficult it is for the people to feel affinity.¹⁴⁾

Another aspect of participation is proximity, the close contacts between the general public and authorities, most easily established in a small commune. This contact means more to the commune than technical efficiency.¹⁵⁾ In the transfer school, there are sometimes remarks made to the effect that communal belongingness is attributed a special value. The communal border is not merely a technical arrangement based on certain economic and population calculations; in the main, it delimits an area wherein the citizens wish to feel affinity and well-being and where a sense of continuity with the past is strong.¹⁶⁾ One debater even speaks of the commune as a "form of life itself".¹⁷⁾

The criticism against the communal mergers also discusses the problems that threaten civic administration in the form of an increasing bureaucracy. In large communes, the representatives can be overshadowed by the civil servants, the communes becoming distant and strange to the citizens. "To be ruled by the civil servants of the giant commune feels, to the individual member of the commune, about the same as being ruled by the state officials."¹⁸⁾ This can lead to reduced interest in political life in general.¹⁹⁾

The transfer school also questions whether the proposed communal mergers result in economic improvements for the communes: "three poor communes make one poor commune".²⁰⁾ The equalization of communes that a merger possibly produces is of local character. The really big differences between the various parts of the country are never actually tackled.²¹⁾ The plans for the new communes are too largely based on the use of cars and motor vehicles. The thinly-populated regions, where the people are of late middle age and the distances are long, have serious communication problems.

12) Svenningsson (h) FK 1962:8, p. 64.

13) Heckscher (h) AK 1962:8, p. 38; cf. note 14.

14) Heckscher (h) AK 1962:8, p. 37 f.; Kaijser (h) FK 1962:8, p. 93; Virgin (h) FK 1962:8, p. 73 f.

14a) Sydsvenska Dagbladet 6.9.1961.

15) Heckscher (h) AK 1962:8, p. 38.

16) Hagberg (h) FK 1962:8, p. 85.

17) Sundberg 1961, p. 163 ff.

18) Nilsson *et al* (cp) motion FK 1961:14, p. 3 f.; cf. Kaijser (h) FK 1962:8, p. 94; Bengtsson (cp) FK 1962:8, p. 43; Expressen 1.3.1961.

19) Nyberg *et al* (fp) motion AK 1961:854, p. 8 f.

20) Nilsson (h) AK 1962:8, p. 79 f.; cf. Heckscher *et al.* (h) motion AK 1961:859, p. 10 f.; Svenningsson (h) FK 1962:8, p. 39.

21) Heckscher *et al.* (h) motion AK 1961:859, p. 10 f.

The old, the very young, the sick, and the handicapped have difficulty in reaching the centre of the commune.²²⁾

6.3.4 Subsystem — means and goals

The subsystem variable. The transfer school does not recommend any change in the construction of the subsystem. Despite this, the discussion of the future of communal democracy will occupy a large part and an important position in the school's argumentation. As earlier mentioned, this is because the merger school, through its initiative, dominates the argumentation of other actors. The latter then primarily interpret the communal merger as a threat to the communal democracy.

The transfer school supports the classical decentralization view, according to which, local self-government shall fundamentally be carried out by representatives. The representatives shall not only make the decisions, but also actively take part in planning and executing decisions.²³⁾ The central idea of local government is that "the decisions do not lie with the civil servants — no matter how well trained these may be — but with the representatives". However, in order to fulfil their functions, they must have civil servants to help them.²⁴⁾

Goals for the subsystem variable. The transfer school has, as the most important decentralization goal at the condition level, "to guarantee the widest possible civic influence on the solution of social problems . . .,"²⁵⁾ i.e. "interest in public affairs must be kept alive by as many as possible being engaged in them".²⁶⁾ Because they advocate primarily the aspect of participation, the subsystem variable is very important for the transfer school.

The ideal commune sketched by many debaters in the school must offer a close contact between the governing and the governed.²⁷⁾ Those who govern, i.e. those with the real power over the commune's allocation of values, must therefore be representatives. The old village democracy, "with its deep anchorage and wide ramifications in a lay opinion, among those who harbour the most intimate knowledge and experience the strongest affinity with their own environment" is a thing too precious for Swedish society to lose.²⁸⁾ The personal stamp that a commune must have is easily lost if the representatives must increasingly hand over decisions to civil servants.²⁹⁾

Decentralization can also lead to conditions for the political system.

22) *ibid.*, p. 13.

23) Magnusson (h) AK 1962:8, p. 23; Nilsson *et al* (cp) motion FK 1961:14, p. 2 ff.; Expressen 1.3.1961; Heckscher (h) AK 1962:8, p. 38.

24) Sydsvenska Dagbladet 6.9.1961.

25) Hamrin Jönk. (fp) AK 1962:8, p. 29; cf. Heckscher (h) AK 1962:8, p. 39.

26) Nya Wermlands-Tidningen 13.3.1962.

27) Kaijser (h) FK 1962:8, p. 94.

28) Hamrin Jönk. (fp) AK 1962:8, p. 29; cf. Expressen 1.3.1961; Sydsvenska Dagbladet 6.9.1961.

29) Nilsson *et al* (cp) motion FK 1961:14, p. 3 ff.; Nyberg *et al* (fp) motion AK 1961:854, p. 8 f. Kaijser (h) FK 1962:8, p. 94.

Examples of this are, first, the above-mentioned standpoint that the entire democracy rests on local government.³⁰⁾ Because communal mergers allow increasingly fewer citizens the opportunity to take part in communal activities, they are, in general, a danger to democracy.³¹⁾ Second, there are education conditions. Through communal activities, the representative learns to manage public affairs. This can then benefit national politics. Thus, local politics will function as a school for politicians. "It is the basis, it is the educational way leading to the even greater tasks in representative government."³²⁾

6.3.5 Subject areas — means and goals

The subject area variable. The transfer school regards a change in the distribution of subject areas as an alternative to the merger school's communal division reform.¹⁾ It is thought easier sometimes to transfer the subject areas that the local communes do not manage to the county council commune or to the state. If division changes are carried out, they will very soon prove insufficient.²⁾ The question is whether or not one would gain by reverting to the old parishes with their natural boundaries and, instead, transferring cost-demanding subject areas to the county council communes. A small well-combined unit would thus be secured, where everyone could make himself heard, as well as a large and efficiently working commune.³⁾

Goals for the subject area variable. When the transfer school discusses subject areas, their discussion usually relates to the debate about the choice of implementers. Sometimes, particular subject areas are chosen for examination. The care of the aged and certain labour market policy measures ought to be transferred to the county councils.⁴⁾ The placing of the elementary school should be reconsidered.⁵⁾ Other subject areas, for instance, social welfare, ought to remain in the local commune.⁶⁾ The principle is valid that the commune shall really exert an influence over the decentralized subject areas. The commune need not be responsible for an allocation of values that shall be precisely the same throughout the country. Some types of payment which are made to citizens under certain conditions are the same everywhere. Because they are of no particular interest to the commune, they need not be decentralized. From that standpoint, the educational system is perhaps not to

30) Borås Tidning 29.3.1962.

31) Nya Wermlands-Tidningen 13.3.1962.

32) Nya Wermlands-Tidningen 11.8.1961; Borås Tidning 29.3.1962; Kaijser (h) FK 1962:8, p. 94; Virgin (h) FK 1962:8, p. 74.

1) Nyberg *et al.* (fp) motion AK 1961:854, p. 9 f.; Bengtsson (cp) FK 1962:8, p. 43 f.; Heckscher (h) AK 1962:8, p. 37.

2) Dagens Nyheter 25.2.1961, 22.9.1961.

3) Expressen 1.3.1961; cf. Kvällsposten 8.3.1962.

4) Nyberg *et al.* (fp) motion AK 1961:854, p. 9 f.

5) Heckscher *et al.* (h) motion AK 1961:859, p. 11; cf. Bengtsson FK 1962:8, p. 44; Sundberg 1961, p. 165; Dagens Nyheter 25.2.1961.

6) Heckscher *et al.* (h) motion AK 1961:859, p. 11; cf. Hamrin Jönk. (fp) AK 1962:8, p. 29.

be the responsibility of the commune. On the other hand, certain types of planning that are of great interest to the commune ought to be decentralized.⁷⁾ In conclusion, the fundamental points of view, which are to guide the decentralization of subject areas, can be described as follows:

The local communes should thus be responsible only for those administrative duties that aim at preserving the special region's interests and possibilities, which can be given scope restricted to the commune, which are important to the local environment, and which, from the aspect of costs, can reasonably be carried by the members of the commune.⁸⁾

The transfer school interprets the subject areas as important for the degree of decentralization. However, with reference to autonomy, the opinion is that the proposed transfers of subject areas have no importance. The educational system, for instance, is so strongly directed that it cannot be said to have any significance for self-government.⁹⁾ If certain subject areas are removed from the communes, there is, none the less, a sufficient number left. This can, moreover, be those that mean most for the shaping of the small district's individuality, tradition, and environment.¹⁰⁾

Proximity and participation conditions are indicated generally as goals for decentralization. According to these, the right of decision shall be handed over to those "who have the local knowledge and who are most affected by the decisions".¹¹⁾ These are the functions that shall be communal and which the commune shall thus deal with.¹²⁾

6.3.6 Direction and review — means and goals

The direction and review variables. The transfer school generally presents the view that the decentralized allocation of values shall be weakly directed. This means, from the aspect of the subsystem, that it shall have great autonomy in relation to the authorities of the political system.¹³⁾ The commune shall really have influence over the allocation of values that it executes.¹⁴⁾

The transfer school devotes special interest to the relation between direct steering and financial-steering. The basis for this relation is formulated according to the following:

In general, the relation must always be kept clear between the communal influence on an activity area and the state contribution to the same area. The contribution must be directly proportional to the restraint exerted by the state on the commune.¹⁵⁾

7) Bengtsson (cp) FK 1962:8, p. 44; cf. Smålands Folkblad 6.5.1961.

8) Svenningsson *et al.* (h) reservation KU 1962:1, p. 35; Hagberg (h) FK 1962:8, p. 46 f.; Heckscher *et al.* (h) motion AK 1961:859, p. 7; Hamrin Jönk. (fp) AK 1962:8, p. 29.

9) Dagens Nyheter 25.2.1961; cf. note 5.

10) Hamrin Jönk. (fp) AK 1962:8, p. 29.

11) Virgin (h) FK 1962:8, p. 74.

12) Ståhl (fp) AK 1962:8, p. 92.

13) Virgin (h) FK 1962:8, p. 74; cf. Nilsson *et al.* (cp) motion FK 1961:14, p. 4 f.

14) Bengtsson (cp) FK 1962:8, p. 44; cf. Heckscher *et al.* (h) motion AK 1961:859, p. 11; Nilsson *et al.* (cp) motion FK 1961:14, p. 5 f.

15) Virgin (h) FK 1962:8, p. 74.

Where the commune must allocate values in subject areas of state character, the state should be responsible for the costs. The communes shall contribute only so much as will conform with the necessary economy. Here, it is supposed that the communes are more economic with their own resources than with those of the state.¹⁶⁾

According to the transfer school, the degree of decentralization also includes an autonomy aspect. Communal affairs are regulated partly by statutes that prescribe what the commune shall do, and partly by various forms of state contributions. In practice, these two forms of direction will have the same effect. Financial-steering — it is pointed out — can have negative effects also in a way other than by a lessening of autonomy. The communes might distort their appraisals of such activities where they have to take into account only the small part that constitutes their own costs.¹⁷⁾

Goals for the direction and review variables. Giving the communes freedom of action, i.e. the use of weak direction, increases the motivation of the commune members for the task. Communal interest and responsibility presumes that the commune is actually allowed to make unlimited decisions.¹⁸⁾

6.4 The localization school

The material used to construct the localization school is somewhat less extensive than that used for the transfer school. The argumentation of the two schools is, at least in one respect, similar in character. It is very largely characterized by polemics against the merger school.

6.4.1 Situation and situation prognosis

The localization school too considers that many communes cannot perform their functions in a satisfactory manner from the aspect of economy.¹⁾ Its appraisal of the reasons for this, however, deviates somewhat from that of the other schools. Moreover, the localization school in a few instances presents different situation prognoses.

Two causes for the situation of the small communes are emphasized. First, a considerable unloading of costs from the state to the communes has taken place; second, several subject areas have been decentralized to the communes.²⁾ The increase in costs for the small communes can to some extent be explained by the fact that the state contributions have not been adapted

16) Svenningsson *et al.* (h) reservation KU 1962:1, p. 35; Hagberg (h) FK 1962:8, p. 46 ff.

17) Virgin (h) FK 1962:8, p. 74; Heckscher *et al.* (h) motion AK 1961:859, p. 7.

18) Virgin (h) FK 1962:8, p. 74.

1) Hansson *et al.* (cp) motion AK 1961:860, p. 4 f.; Pettersson *et al.* (cp) reservation KU 1962:1, p. 41 f.; Eliasson (cp) AK 1962:8, p. 41.

2) Hansson *et al.* (cp) motion AK 1961:860, p. 1; Eliasson (cp) AK 1962:8, p. 41; Carlsson (cp) FK 1962:8, p. 69.

to the depreciation of money. The real value of the contributions has therefore become increasingly less. To the extent that the state contributions have been aimed at equalizing the economic position of the various communes, this effect has failed to appear. The differences between various communal types have, on the contrary, increased.³⁾ If we look at the contributions towards equalizing taxation, for instance, we notice that they have been unable to equalize the differences in tax basis.⁴⁾

The localization school wishes to show that the development which one now tries to stop by communal mergers was brought about by political decisions. It is therefore not meaningful to make prognoses on the basis of this development.⁵⁾ It is likely that depopulation will continue for some time, but it is by no means certain that the present tendency towards concentration will continue for ever. "On the other hand, it is feasible that the migration can gradually move in the opposite direction, as happened in the U.S.A."⁶⁾

6.4.2 Establishing precedence among means and goals

Concerning the decentralization means, the localization school recommends an increased financial-steering as a solution of the economic difficulties of the communes. Apart from this, it wishes to supplement the decentralization measures with a more active localization policy. A summarizing description of the recommendations is offered by the following quotation:

The essential measures for improving the conditions of communal activities are . . . that a reasonable cost distribution is made between the state and the communes and that here an effective tax equalization is realized. As we have also pointed out, communal activities should in many instances also be allotted increased resources by an active localization policy.⁷⁾

Because the localization policy is to be used in close relation with the decentralization measures, this justifies a review of the school's standpoint in the matter. The primary objectives of the localization policy are to bring commercial undertakings into the under-employed areas. It must be a fundamental right for the individual to choose his place of abode and employment. The environment must be such as to satisfy the needs and values of the people.⁸⁾

An active localization policy, which on a broader scale is aimed at encouraging enterprise and settlement in the rural district agglomerations, should . . . strengthen

3) Hansson *et al.* (cp) motion AK 1961:860, p. 4 f.; Pettersson (cp) FK 1962:8, p. 42.

4) Eliasson (cp) AK 1962:8, p. 41.

5) Eliasson (cp) AK 1962:8, p. 59; cf. Politisk Tidskrift 1961, p. 35.

6) Pettersson *et al.* (cp) reservation KU 1962:1, p. 43; cf. Boo (cp) AK 1962:8, pp. 27, 34.

7) Hansson *et al.* (cp) motion AK 1961:860, p. 7; cf. Pettersson *et al.* (cp) reservation KU 1962:1, p. 45; Eliasson (cp) AK 1962:8, p. 64; Antonsson (cp) AK 1962:8, p. 104 f.; Norra Skåne 29.11.1961, 19.12.1961, 28.2.1962; Politisk Tidskrift 1961, pp. 37, 259 f.

8) Sundin (cp) motion FK 1962:477, p. 13 f.; cf. Norra Skåne 28.2.1962.

the population and economic basis of the communes, so that communal merger would in many instances prove unnecessary.⁹⁾

The school sees a clear relation between the localization policy and the decentralization policy. If through some form of financial-steering the commune is provided with better resources, its possibilities for attracting enterprises are increased. When these are well established the economic basis of the commune will be improved.¹⁰⁾ It is hardly realistic to imagine the countryside as a localization for enterprises. It must, instead, be directed to the urbanized areas, other than those intended to become centres of the proposed communal blocks.¹¹⁾

The localization school regards self-government as a matter of balance between what is referred to as democracy and efficiency. Concerning the attitude of the school to this balance, there is no doubt that:

In our opinion, less importance should be attached to the efficiency of local government than to its impact on the social activities of its citizens.¹²⁾

The aim is to maintain or to strengthen the present local government. Two points are emphasized here: first, that decentralization is carried out as far as possible (the importance component); second, that citizens are given the greatest possibilities of participation (the influence component).¹³⁾ The simplest way to accomplish this is to improve the economy of the communes. This is best done by an effective distribution of costs between commune and state and an equality of taxation between the communes.¹⁴⁾

6.4.3 Subterritory — means and goals

The subterritory variable. The localization school does not altogether reject the thought of communal mergers. To some extent, they may be necessary to improve the conditions for some communes. Nor does it completely reject the thought of economic-geographically composed regions. In many cases, such a classification basis can be suitable. However, other factors also play a role here, for instance, distance and communications, cultural and traditional feelings of affinity, and environmental standpoints.¹⁵⁾

The localization school concerns itself to no slight extent with the problems that arise when attempts are made to combine subsocieties of various types. If rural districts are merged into large towns, the former have much difficulty

9) Pettersson *et al.* (cp) reservation KU 1962:1, p. 44; Hansson *et al.* (cp) motion AK 1961:860, p. 4; Eliasson (cp) AK 1962:8, p. 41.

10) Politisk Tidskrift 1961, p. 259.

11) Hansson *et al.* (cp) motion AK 1961:860, p. 4; cf. Boo (cp) AK 1962:8, p. 25.

12) Hansson *et al.* (cp) motion AK 1961:860, p. 3; cf. Pettersson *et al.* (cp) reservation KU 1962:1, p. 46; Boo (cp) AK 1962:8, p. 25; Jonnergård 1962, p. 100 ff.

13) Hansson *et al.* (cp) motion AK 1961:860, p. 1.

14) Norra Skåne 28.2.1962; Eliasson (cp) AK 1962:8, p. 42 f.

15) Pettersson *et al.* (cp) reservation KU 1962:1, p. 42 f.; Hansson *et al.* (cp) motion AK 1961:860, p. 2 f.; Norra Skåne 29.11.1961, 19.12.1961, 28.2.1962.

in asserting their interests. Such mergers must therefore not generally be allowed. The significance of this is that the principle of centres cannot, as a rule, be accepted as the sole principle for the communal division. Attention must be given to local conditions and needs.¹⁶⁾ The localization school devotes special interest to the small agglomerations in the rural districts. It is important that these — “a credit to our country in many respects” — be maintained so that they may function as rallying-points for the people in the surrounding agricultural region.¹⁷⁾

Goals for the subterritory variable. A general goal for the localization school's use of the subterritory variable is shown in the above means section. It is considered vital that local characteristics should have possibilities for continuing to exist and that the spread of population is secured by encouraging the small agglomerations. Otherwise, the argumentation concerning the subterritory goals is seldom explicit. The course chosen here is to extract the goals from the argumentation that opposes the merger school.

One clear goal is to create communes with a feeling of affinity between the members. This results in voluntary mergers being willingly accepted, because, from the beginning, the feeling of affinity should be found in the new commune.¹⁸⁾ Another important goal is that the thinly populated area must not be deprived of the possibility of developing, as could happen in a merger of the proposed type. This is one of the reasons the small agglomerations attract such great interest from the localization school.¹⁹⁾

Furthermore, the localization school rejects the merger school's prognoses for the new communal division. It will not result in the alleged equalization. Even though whole counties were to be combined, marked differences in tax basis would remain between the county communes thus created.²⁰⁾

The large communal blocks jeopardize the communal democracy to which the school has given priority over the efficiency standpoints. Those in the thinly populated areas and those in the communes around the large towns (the encircling communes) would have less chance of exercising influence on communal activities.²¹⁾ The communal division affects the citizen's opportunities of taking part directly and actively in the social matters within the framework of local government.²²⁾

6.4.4 Subsystems — means and goals

The subsystem variable. The localization school does not support any change

16) *ibid.*

17) Pettersson (cp) FK 1962:8, p. 41; Antonsson (cp) AK 1962:8, pp. 104, 107; Gustafsson (cp) AK 1962:8, p. 95 f.

18) Boo (cp) AK 1962:8, p. 26; cf. Eliasson (cp) AK 1962:8, p. 45.

19) Carlsson (cp) FK 1962:8, p. 69; Pettersson (cp) FK 1962:8, p. 41 f.; Boo (cp) AK 1962:8, p. 25.

20) Pettersson (cp) FK 1962:8, p. 42; Andersson (cp) AK 1962:8, p. 119.

21) Pettersson *et al.* (cp) reservation KU 1962:1, p. 42; Hansson *et al.* (cp) motion AK 1961:860, p. 3.

22) Boo (cp) AK 1962:8, p. 24.

in the subsystem. The description of goals and means that can here be extracted from the argumentation that opposes the merger school agrees, on broad lines, with that of the transfer school. On the means level, it advocates a subsystem in which the representatives have a decisive influence on the allocation of values and where they are in close contact with the members of the commune.

Goals for the subsystem variable. The decisive objectives in forming the subsystem are quite obvious: it is necessary to get the active co-operation of the citizens in communal activities. Logically, the next question should be: Why is the participation aspect emphasized to such a degree? The answer to this question refers to the objectives of decentralization in general and can be illustrated by the following quotation:

Each lessening of the opportunities of the citizens to take part in or to influence the decision-making process must be a serious loss to democracy.²³⁾

Interest, not only in communal matters but also in social matters in general, can be expected to increase if many citizens are given the opportunity for active participation.²⁴⁾ Communal efficiency cannot be reduced to a problem of technique. It is also a matter of contact between the governors and the governed.²⁵⁾

Active participation in the commune's affairs is also educational. "Communal activity is a good school and a basis of our democracy, of our democratic self-government."²⁶⁾ This argument concerning education is related to relation objectives, according to which the whole representative democracy on the central level is based on the civic participation and civic training that communal activities offer.²⁷⁾ Against this background, it is natural that the localization school's argumentation against mergers is centred on fears that the citizens' opportunities for participation will be lessened. On broad lines, it is the same argumentation as the transfer school presents on this point. Fewer people take part in affairs in the large commune, the members of the commune get less information and fewer opportunities for influence, and the communal issues become so large and complicated that they must be handed over to civil servants or to full-time employed representatives.²⁸⁾ These disadvantages will, to a very large extent, affect those in the thinly populated area communes.²⁹⁾

23) Pettersson *et al.* (cp) KU 1961:1, p. 43; cf. Hansson *et al.* (cp) motion AK 1961:860, p. 3.

24) Gustafsson (cp) AK 1962:8, p. 93 f.

25) Carlsson (cp) FK 1962:8, p. 71.

26) Carlsson (cp) FK 1962:8, p. 72; cf. Gustafsson (cp) AK 1962:8, p. 93 f.

27) Skånska Dagbladet 22.11.1961; cf. Boo (cp) AK 1962:8, p. 24.

28) Gustafsson (cp) AK 1962:8, p. 93; cf. Norra Skåne 21.2.1962.

29) Hansson *et al.* (cp) motion AK 1961:860, p. 3 f.

6.4.5 Subject areas — means and goals

The subject area variable. The localization school does not recommend any change with regard to subject areas. “We wish . . . to point out that, in our opinion, no large changes should be made in the functions of the local commune.”³⁰⁾ There are reasons, however, for seriously examining the problem of subject areas.³¹⁾ It is the difficulties experienced by the communes in managing economically the decentralized subject areas that are mainly cited as a justification for a communal merger.³²⁾

6.4.6 Direction and review — means and goals

The direction and review variables. Together with the localization policy, the localization school recommends increased financial-steering. The latter should be formulated partly as a contribution to equalize taxation and partly as grants for some specially cost-demanding subject areas. The national old-age pensions, for instance, should be totally borne by the state.³³⁾ The increased financial-steering, however, must not result in the use of grants being directed in detail.³⁴⁾

Goals for direction and review. The objectives primarily aimed at by the increased financial-steering are a stronger economy in the communes.³⁵⁾ The improved economy can have consequences in many different ways. With the improved economic situation, the commune’s attraction for commercial ventures increases and thus the tax basis improves.³⁶⁾ Ultimately, all this is aimed at providing the citizens in different communes with the same communal service based on the same taxes.³⁷⁾ This refers to meeting the demands for justice and equality between the citizens.³⁸⁾ By the proposed financial-steering, all communes would have the chance to carry out an expansive communal policy.³⁹⁾ The financial-steering would also have positive effects for local government:

It is probably no exaggeration to say that there exists no reform that suggests greater possibilities for maintaining and strengthening the local government.⁴⁰⁾

With imprecise direction, the communal influence upon local affairs is great. It can be presumed that the mismanagement of resources will become greater at a detailed direction.⁴¹⁾

30) Hansson *et al.* (cp) motion AK 1961:860, p. 6.

31) Pettersson (cp) FK 1962:8, p. 42; Eliasson (cp) AK 1962:8, p. 41.

32) Eliasson (cp) AK 1962:8, pp. 41, 58.

33) Hansson *et al.* (cp) motion AK 1961:860, p. 6; Pettersson *et al.* (cp) reservation KU 1962:1, p. 44 f.

34) Politisk Tidskrift 1961, p. 260; Hansson *et al.* (cp) motion AK 1961:860, p. 5 f.

35) Norra Skåne 28.2.1962.

36) Eliasson (cp) AK 1962:8, p. 59.

37) Antonsson (cp) AK 1962:8, p. 105.

38) Eliasson (cp) AK 1962:8, p. 42.

39) Antonsson (cp) AK 1962:8, p. 104 f.

40) Eliasson (cp) AK 1962:8, p. 43; cf. p. 64.

41) Politisk Tidskrift 1961, p. 260.

6.5 Degree of decentralization

A high degree of decentralization is characterized by the subsystems dealing with the allocation of values in many and important subject areas (importance), with weak direction and review from the decision makers of the political system (autonomy) and with great influence from the subsociety member in general on the subsystem's allocation of values (influence). The actors who defend a maintained or increased degree of decentralization can be described as supporters of decentralization. The three decentralization schools, presented in the foregoing, could therefore be analysed according to their attitude to the various components in the degree of decentralization.

6.5.1 Importance

The merger school. One of the fundamental objectives of the merger school is to create, through a new communal division, communes that have sufficient economic basis to enable them to allocate values in many important subject areas.¹⁾ Therefore it opposes an attitude that wishes the communes to be deprived of important subject areas. The school finds difficulty in understanding those who believe that local government can be strengthened and maintained by reducing the number of subject areas for the commune.²⁾ Each transfer of subject areas means that the local government is correspondingly reduced.³⁾ When attempts are made to increase the degree of decentralization by communal mergers, there is the risk that members of the subsociety will find their influence diminished. The present situation, however, involves a choice between a restricted, and in certain cases more or less fictitious, communal democracy in too small communal units or a real communal democracy in communes with better economic basis.⁴⁾ For the communes to be able to function, it is necessary that there should be economic and administrative working order.⁵⁾ The balance between the importance component and the influence component is also revealed in a remark that suggests it is impossible to advance the reduction of the number of representatives as an argument against mergers. This would mean that the communal organs are regarded as ends in themselves and the requirement of the citizens for service as something secondary.⁶⁾

The transfer school. The main recommendation of the transfer school is that subject areas should be transferred from the local commune to the county councils or to the state. It is thought, however, that this is of no importance for the degree of decentralization. In some of the subject areas that are

1) prop 1961:180, p. 47 f.

2) Johansson Trollh. (s) AK 1962:8, p. 135; cf. Hamrin klm (fp) AK 1962:8, p. 66; Andersson (s) AK 1962:8, p. 31; Skånska Dagbladet 23.2.1962.

3) Wiklund (s) AK 1962:8, p. 101; Skånska Dagbladet 23.11.1961; Wedén (fp) AK 1962:8, p. 110.

4) Hamrin klm (fp) motion AK 1962:858, p. 3; Hammar (fp) AK 1962:8, p. 78.

5) Aftonbladet 29.11.1961; cf. Johansson Trollh. (s) AK 1962:8, p. 135.

6) Hamrin klm (fp) motion AK 1962:858, p. 3.

proposed for transfer, many communes may not allocate values.⁷⁾ Moreover, the subject areas — for instance, the educational system — are so strongly directed that the communes have no real influence.⁸⁾ It is valid, in principle, that the communes actually should have influence over the decentralized subject areas.⁹⁾

The localization school. The balance between efficiency and democracy — importance and influence — must always be in favour of democracy.¹⁰⁾ The distribution of subject areas should not be the object of great changes¹¹⁾, although there is reason to examine the problem of subject areas.¹²⁾ In order to solve the economic problems of the communes while maintaining their importance and without the reduced civic influence implied in a merger, the state grants must be increased.¹³⁾

Of the three schools, the merger school and the localization school recommend no change in the importance component. The transfer school thinks that the transfer of subject areas does not result in any difference in the aspect of importance. In any event, it does not correspond to the increase in the degree of decentralization implied by the increased civic influence on the remaining subject areas.

6.5.2 Autonomy

The merger school. The merger school does not advance any direct recommendations concerning the direction variable. It points out more generally “the essentially unsatisfactory process of making the communes increasingly dependent on state grants and correspondingly subjecting them to state control”.¹⁾ Autonomy for the commune is secured by giving it sufficient financial strength to perform its function.²⁾

The transfer school. No change concerning direction is proposed. In general, the value of communal autonomy is emphasized and the school is averse to a system that is communal in form, but state directed in substance.³⁾ If we are to speak about local self-government, the commune must have the right of free decision.⁴⁾ Autonomy is obtained by adapting the subject areas to the financial strength of the commune.⁵⁾

The localization school. Because the school recommends financial-steering, it is the only one of the three schools that proposes a measure that essentially

7) Dagens Nyheter 25.2.1961.

8) Heckscher *et al.* (h) motion AK 1961:859, p. 11.

9) Bengtsson (cp) FK 1962:8, p. 44.

10) Hansson *et al.* (cp) motion AK 1961:860, p. 3.

11) *ibid.*, p. 6.

12) Pettersson (cp) FK 1962:8, p. 42.

13) Eliasson (cp) AK 1962:8, p. 43.

1) prop 1961:180, p. 44; Hammar (fp) AK 1962:8, p. 78; Hamrin klm (fp) motion AK 1961:858, p. 5.

2) Cf. prop 1961:180, p. 44.

3) Nilsson *et al.* (cp) motion FK 1961:14, p. 4 f.; Heckscher *et al.* (h) motion AK 1961:859, p. 7.

4) Virgin (h) FK 1962:8, p. 74.

5) Cf. Nilsson *et al.* (cp) motion FK 1961:14, p. 4; Heckscher (h) AK 1962:8, p. 37 ff.

reduces autonomy. They intend that increased financial-steering should be so formulated as not to restrict a commune's freedom of action.⁶⁾ Like the merger school, they would attempt to adapt financial strength to the decentralized subject areas. However, financial-steering is chosen instead of communal merger as the principal means.

All three schools advocate maintaining the present degree of autonomy for the local commune. The merger school and the localization school in this respect try, in different ways, to strengthen the economic basis of the communes. The localization school uses financial-steering, but wishes to formulate it in such a way as not to reduce the commune's autonomy. The transfer school transfers subject areas that are strongly directed to state or county council and maintains only those on which communes have a strong influence.

6.5.3 Influence

The merger school. The contra-argumentation is largely concentrated on the lowering in influence that a communal merger is thought to bring about; therefore, the merger school is often forced to adopt attitudes concerning the influence component. In itself, it does not wish to agree that the influence of the members of the commune is less in large communes¹⁾, but the balances that are presented are in favour of the importance component. The school points out, for instance, that we must not regard self-government too formally: "It is decisive that the commune has functions and the capacity to fulfil them."²⁾ Without financial strength, the communal democracy is, in any case, more or less fictitious.³⁾

The transfer school and the localization school. Both these schools argue against a new communal division, and do it decisively because of their attitude to the influence component. It is here thought that it must be obvious that greater importance should be attached to participation than to efficiency.⁴⁾

The fundamental difference between the three schools probably lies in the question of balancing the importance component and the influence component; whereas the merger school emphasizes the importance component, the other two schools indicate the influence component as being decisive. However, there is no reason to over-emphasize the differences here. Concerning the view of a decentralized allocation of values as a fundamental aspect of democracy, the three decentralization schools seem to be in complete agreement.

6) Hansson *et al.* (cp) motion AK 1961:860, p. 5 f.

1) prop 1961:180, p. 48; Hammar (fp) AK 1962:8, p. 77.

2) Johansson Trollh. (s) AK 1962:8, p. 135.

3) Hamrin klm (fp) motion AK 1962:858, p. 3.

4) Hansson *et al.* (cp) motion AK 1961:860, p. 3; cf. Hamrin Jönk. (fp) AK 1962:8, p. 29; Heckscher (h) AK 1962:8, p. 39.

CONCLUSIONS

The decentralization model presented in this study is a scheme of analysis for the study of decentralization. This scheme is also intended as a systematic preparatory work for the formulation of a theory of decentralization.¹⁾ This means that the scheme can be interpreted as the first step towards a theory. It is also possible that the preparation of schemes of analysis is a prerequisite for the development of theories.²⁾

The above reasoning poses the immediate question: what is the difference between a scheme of analysis and a theory? The answer is exceedingly difficult to find; at any rate, a commonly accepted interpretation is not to be found in the literature. Where theories are concerned, however, one criterion is usually pointed out: the theory must be able to give explanations.³⁾ This is usually not required of a scheme of analysis.

One possible viewpoint is that there is a continuum from the most simple classifications to the most "full-fledged" theory. Young, by referring to various opinions on the significance of a scheme of analysis, attempts to identify three points in this continuum. The least ambitious of these opinions is presented by Robert Merton and corresponds most closely to the ambition level of the decentralization model. Merton's "general orientations", which consequently constitute a kind of scheme of analysis, emphasize classification. This means that the scheme "outlines the types of variables that an analysis should take into account, and provides concepts with which to view a particular subject area".⁴⁾ For the rest, Merton's standpoint can be described as follows:

A general orientation can therefore be viewed as a framework for inquiry and as a source of criteria of relevance and importance in selecting data. It should also locate the subject matter under analysis in the broader spectrum of human concerns. And finally, it should provide a general perspective from which to view a subject area or a way of cutting into the mass of data to be analyzed.⁵⁾

There is another important resemblance between these general orientations and the decentralization model; neither of these two schemes of analysis

1) cf. Sjöblom 1968 p. 7 f., cf. Young 1968 p. 97.

2) cf. Young 1968 p. 99.

3) cf. Meehan 1967 p. 23 ff., Zetterberg 1965 p. 11ff.

4) Young 1968 p. 8.

5) *ibid.*

contains any formal hypotheses. However they are well suited for use as aids in the process of formulating hypotheses.⁶⁾

The decentralization model was built up in three stages corresponding to the first three chapters of this study. We set out from the very generally formulated control process, which was a scheme of analysis for the study of the relation between decision maker and implementer in an organization. The control process was furnished with various stipulations intended to make it suited to the analysis of large organizations. The scheme has been used before, either wholly or in part, namely in a survey attempting to formulate problems for the study of public administration⁷⁾, and in an investigation into the relations between the decision-making and the implementing units of the Swedish county council⁸⁾.

In the next stage, the aspects of level type and organization were introduced and the main modes of transfer of the allocation of values in the political system were deduced. In principle, the variables thus obtained ought to be suited to use in analyses of all types of political system. The last stage consisted of a detailed survey of the decentralization variables. The empirically based reasoning in this survey was designed to draw attention, at first hand, to the problems of decentralization essential to the liberal-democracies.

Where decentralization goals were concerned, the only differentiation that was made was between conditions (intermediate goals) and values (final goals). In the last two chapters of the study, the goal analysis was developed in connection with examples of practical problems.

To test a scheme of analysis empirically poses a number of fundamental and extremely difficult theoretical problems. When it comes to testing a theory, the idea is that it should be possible to falsify it.⁹⁾ This is not conceivable when it is a matter of testing a scheme of analysis because the scheme decides the "meaning and significance of facts"¹⁰⁾. Instead, a scheme of analysis is usually appraised according to its usefulness.¹¹⁾ The testing should therefore refer to the usefulness of the scheme. The exact meaning of this is not easy to establish, but an estimation could possibly be attained by means of questions such as: can the scheme of analysis embrace the content of the material? is it easy to use? and similar. Where arguments of this type are concerned, we soon realize that we are dealing with considerable margins of uncertainty.

"Taxonomies summarize and inspire *Descriptive studies*"¹²⁾. Although studies of this type are found at a lower level of ambition than are explanatory analyses, they are often a prerequisite for further progress.¹³⁾

6) *ibid.*

7) Lundquist 1971.

8) Petterson 1972.

9) cf. Sjöblom 1968 p. 10.

10) cf. Meehan 1967 p. 13.

11) Meehan 1967 p. 27 f.; Young 1968 p. 95, cf. Sjöblom 1968 p. 7 ff.

12) Zetterberg 1965 p. 26.

13) Meehan 1967 p. 10.

To what extent can the decentralization model be said to have been tested by the content analysis? At first hand, we have an indication of the instrumentality of the model as far as the means variables are concerned; these form the most elaborate part of the model. The material can easily be structured in terms of the model. The hypothesis of participation conditions was tested for the 1850s and the hypothesis of the degree of decentralization for the 1960s. Both hypotheses can be said to have been verified at the textual plane.

Another question concerns the scope of the content analysis. The two chapters on the debate illustrate, as plainly as could be desired, to what extent this form of analysis is limited by the material. Whereas the material of the 1850s allowed a comparatively detailed discussion of the relation between different goal categories at the two goal levels, the material of the 1960s was largely concentrated on the means level and on prognoses for the relation between means and conditions. Another crucial consideration is the number of schools of thought that can be identified in the course of the analysis. For the 1850s, only one school in favour of decentralization could be found (even though the span between the standpoints of the various actors might be great), whereas the debate of the 1960s could be related to three different schools in favour of decentralization.

How are the great differences between the two sections of debate to be accounted for? Why does the debate of the 1850s take place at goal level but the debate of the 1960s take place at the means level? Part of the difference can probably be explained by the difference in situations. In the 1850s, administration was mainly centralized; therefore, it was always necessary to justify decentralization. In the 1960s, everyone involved in the debate was agreed on the objective of decentralization; therefore, the discussion could be concentrated on how to achieve the chosen goals.

From one point of view, the two analysis sections can be regarded as a contribution to the debate on the death of the ideologies. At any rate, the analysis provides a unique empirical illustration of the question. The same problems have been analysed using the same scheme of analysis applied to two amounts of material of precisely the same type but one-hundred years apart in time. If one is of the opinion that ideological theses are characterized by debates on goals, the debate of the 1850s is doubtless the more ideologically directed. If the problems of the death of the ideologies are at all interesting, it must be reasonable to test them in a fashion similar to the analysis used here.

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Abbreviations

prop. = proposition (proposal)

res. = reservation

ABEU = allmänna besvär- och ekonomiutskottet (the General Committee on Economy)

RoA = ridderskapet och adeln (the Estate of the Nobility)

Pr = prästeståndet (the Ecclesiastical Estate)

Bg = borgarståndet (the Estate of the Burghers)

Bd = bondeståndet (the Estate of the Peasants)

KU = konstitutionsutskottet (Committee on the Constitution)
(fp) = folkpartiet (Liberal Party)
(cp) = centerpartiet (Centre Party)
(h) = högerpartiet (Conservative Party)
(k) = kommunistpartiet (Communist Party)
(s) = socialdemokraterna (Social Democratic Party)
SOU = statens offentliga utredningar (Annual Series of Official Investigations)
FK = första kammaren (Upper House)
AK = andra kammaren (Lower House)

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MEANS AND GOALS OF POLITICAL DECENTRALIZATION is arranged in two main sections. The first, *The decentralization model*, contains an attempt to construct a scheme of analysis for decentralization. The model is intended as a systematic preparatory work for the formulation of a theory. The second, *The decentralization debate*, is an application of the model to material consisting of texts taken from the debate about local self-government in Sweden.